Church Missionary Society
Pam. Africa-West
Nigeria
244

The Niger Mission.

A West African Chief.

LONDON:
CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
SALISBURY SQUARE, E.C.
1909.

Price 4d. net.

HANDBOOKS ON C.M.S. MISSIONS

IN ILLUSTRATED COVERS.

THE SIERRA LEONE MISSION. 40 pages, and Maps of the Sierra Leone Colony and the Sierra Leone Peninsula. 3*d. net.*

THE YORUBA MISSION. 80 pages, including a Sketch Map. 4*d. net.*

THE NIGER MISSION. 64 pp., including a Sketch Map. 4*d.* net.

THE C.M.S. UGANDA MISSION. 32 pages, with Illustrations and Map. 2*d.* net.

THE EAST AFRICA MISSION. 64 pages, including a Sketch Map. 3*d. net.*

THE BENGAL MISSION. 48 pages, including a Map. 3*d. net.*

THE KASHMIR MISSION. Prepared chiefly from the Life of the late Irene Petrie. 48 pages, including Map. 3*d. net.*

THE SANTAL MISSION, NORTH INDIA. 32 pages, with frontispiece. 3*d. net.*

THE HILL TRIBES OF INDIA. Work among the Malers, Santals, Gonds, Kois, Bhîls, Hill Arrians, and other tribes. 48 pages, with frontispiece. 3*d. net.*

THE CEYLON AND MAURITIUS MISSIONS. 64 pages, with frontispiece, and including Maps, and an Appendix on the Tamil Coolie Mission. 4*d. net.*

THE CHINA MISSION. By the Ven. ARCHDEACON MOULE. 72 pages, including Chronological Table. A special insetted Map is also given. 4*d.* net.

THE STORY OF THE MID-CHINA MISSION. A narrative of sixty years, 1844-1904. By the Ven. ARCHDEACON MOULE. 80 pages, including Chronological Table and Sketch Map. 4*d. net.*

THE JAPAN MISSION. 32 pages, including Sketch Map and a Chronology of the Mission. 2*d. net.*

THE NORTH-WEST CANADA MISSIONS. 80 pages, including Sketch Map and Chronological Table. 4*d. net.*

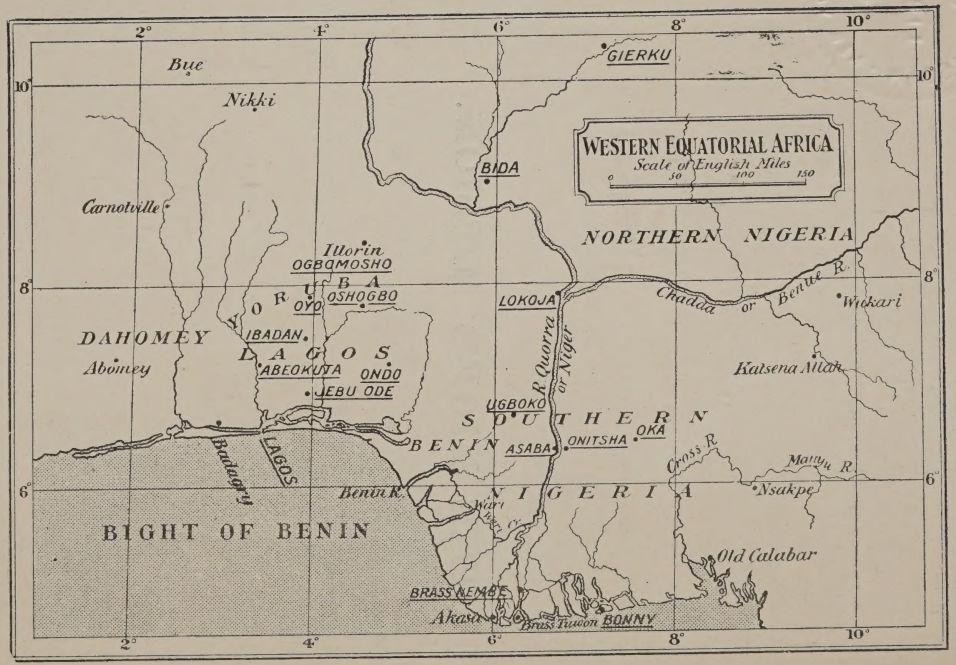
THE MACKENZIE RIVER DIOCESE. Notes by the Right Rev. BISHOP REEVE. 16 pages, with Illustrations and a Sketch Map. 2*d. net.*

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA MISSION. 32 pages, including Sketch Map. 2*d. net.*

[OTHERS IN PREPARATION.]

N.B.—A Series of Outline Histories of C.M.S. Missions, in 3 vols., price 1s. each net., can also be obtained. Further particulars on application to the Manager, Publishing Department, C.M. House, Salisbury Square, London, E.C.

THE NIGER MISSION.



C.M.S. Stations are underlined.

MISSIONS

OF THE

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE NIGER MISSION.

LONDON:

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

SALISBURY SQUARE, E.C.

1909.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
DUKE STREET, STAMFORD STREET, S.E., AND GREAT WINDMILL STREET, W.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

Chap. I. The Country, its Peoples, and their Religions. Area and Population—Physical Features—History of the Country—The Spread of Islam—The Hausas—Pagan Races—Infanticide—The Ibo Gods—Religious Beliefs in the Delta—Religion of the Gwaris . . 7

Chap. II. Early History of the Mission. Preliminary Steps—Beginning of the Mission—A Check—A memorable Year—New Stations—Occupation of Bonny—Bishop Crowther taken Prisoner—Political Troubles—An Edict against Christianity—Persecution in the Delta—A bright Record 15

Chap. III. Trouble and Progress. The Niger Troubles—Death of Bishops Crowther and Hill—Establishment of British Rule—Extension—Native Church Organization—Bible Translation—The Evidence of Statistics . 23

Chap. IV. Stations in the Delta. (1) *Bonny*: The First Ingathering—Missionary Work of the Native Church—Indigenous Movements. (2) *Opobo and Queenstown*. (3) *Okrika*. (4) *Ogbonoma:* Long Juju. (5) *Tuwon:* Snake-worship—Persecution fails to attain its Object—Wholesale Destruction of Idols—Declension. (6) *Nembe*. (7) *Akassa*. (8) *Kaiyama and Patani* . . . 29

Chap. V. Stations on the Lower Niger. (1) *Onitsha:* Protests against human Sacrifices—Efforts to suppress Christianity—Small-pox tends to the Furtherance of the Gospel—Saving Twins—Backsliding—Out-stations.

13005

PAGE

(2) *Osamare.* (3) *Obusi.* (4) *Umudi Oka.* (5) *Oka.*
(6) *Umunya.* (7) *Ebu.* (8) *Asaba:* Out-stations.
(9) *Idumuje Ugboko.* (10) *Idda* 42

Chap. VI. Stations in Northern Nigeria. (1) *Gbebe.*
(2) *Lokoja.* (3) *Kpata.* (4) *Akabe.* (5) *Egga.* (6) *Bida.*
(7) *Mokwa.* (8) *Kuta.* (9) *Zaria.* (10) *Panyam* . 55

Appendix I. Missionaries to the Niger . . . 61

Appendix II. Statistics of the Niger Mission . . 64

THE NIGER MISSION.

CHAPTER I.

THE COUNTRY, ITS PEOPLES, AND THEIR RELIGIONS.

Area and Population.

The sphere of the Niger Mission is the Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria, exclusive of the Western Province of the latter, which practically coincides with the Yoruba Country. Northern Nigeria, which is divided into fourteen provinces, covers an area of 256,400 square miles, and its population, consisting of Hausas, Nupés, and other tribes, is estimated at 7,164,751. In Southern Nigeria, with its three provinces and an area of 77,260 square miles, there are some 6,000,000 people, more than half of whom (3,500,000) are Ibos. These people occupy the tract of country extending from the neighbourhood of the Binue River in Northern Nigeria to Bonny in the Delta, and stretching from the Cross River in the east nearly to Benin in the west.

Physical Features.

The climate is unhealthy. While the heat is less than in many parts of India, it is more oppressive owing to the large amount of moisture in the atmosphere. On the Lower Niger the vegetation is so dense that locomotion is almost impossible excepting along the beaten paths which have been formed by the natives, but as the river is ascended the country becomes more open, until in Northern Nigeria forest land is found only in the neighbourhood of the rivers. Of these the most important are the Niger, which rises near Sierra Leone and has a total course of about 2,500 miles, and the Binue, which rises in Adamawa and flows into the Niger at Lokoja. Both of

these rivers are navigable for a considerable distance, unlike the Kaduna and Gurara, affluents of the Niger, which contain so many rapids that only the lower parts of them can be used as waterways. In the past the Niger has been the great highway of the country, but the construction of railways is now being pushed on. A narrow-gauge line from Lagos to Oshogbo has already been opened, and it is to be continued until, having crossed the Niger at Jebba, it effects a junction in the neighbourhood of Zungeru with another line, 400 miles long, which is already in process of construction from Baro, fourteen miles below Egga, past Bida, to Zaria and Kano.

History of the Country.

Very little is known about the ancient history of the country prior to 1802, when the Fulani, a mixed race of invaders from the north, conquered the greater part of the Central Soudan and founded the powerful Sultanates of Sokoto and Gando. Until a little before that date, so far as Europe was concerned, the Niger was one of the many unsolved mysteries of the Dark Continent. Geographers were acquainted with the fact that there was such a river somewhere in West Central Africa, but where it was they knew not, and as to whither it flowed they were profoundly ignorant. To solve these problems Mungo Park was sent out by the African Association in 1795, and two years later, near Segu, the capital of Bambarra, about 600 miles north-east of Freetown, he caught sight of the river, which there bears the name of the Joliba, 'as broad as the Thames at Westminster, and flowing slowly to the eastward.' The solution of the second problem was not permitted to Park, who was killed in the attempt; Clapperton likewise lost his life; and it was not until 1830 that the Brothers Lander succeeded in descending the river to its mouth and found that it flowed into the Gulf of Guinea.

The merchant soon endeavoured to follow the geographer, and two steamers were speedily fitted out that they might go up the Niger and introduce commerce into the newly opened territories. This effort, made in 1841, signally failed, a large proportion of the European crews falling victims to the climate But a second attempt was made in 1854 under the auspices of the British Government, and was a signal success, for the Binue was ascended 350 miles above its confluence with the Niger, and not one death was recorded. In 1857 the river

was ascended for the third time. As a consequence of these expeditions some portions of the country were thrown open to trade, and in 1882 a company was created to develop their resources, which bore the name of the National African Company until 1886, when it received a charter and became known as the Royal Niger Company. In 1884 and 1887 the whole of Nigeria was declared to be under British protection, and the coast regions, lying between Lagos Colony and the Forcados River, and between the Brass River and Kamerun, were placed under consular jurisdiction. These regions were organized under an Imperial Commissioner in 1891, and soon afterwards they were given the title of the Niger Coast Protectorate. Later on the Protectorate was extended by the addition of the Benin Country, and, still later, to the Chad watershed. In 1900, after thirteen years and a half of successful government, the Royal Niger Company surrendered its charter, the government was transferred to the Colonial Office, the Union Jack was run up at Lokoja, and the whole of Nigeria became a British Protectorate. The Company had done good work during the years that it held its charter. It had secured to the British Empire a fertile territory covering half a million square miles, and, in the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the House of Commons, 'it put down slave-raiding and massacre over a large area.'

The Peoples of Nigeria.

With the exception of the Fulani, a race occupying a position between the Hamite and the negro, all the peoples found in Nigeria are negroes. They may be divided into two classes, Mohammedans and Pagans.

The Spread of Islam.

The Fulani have been the great instruments of the spread of Mohammedanism in the country. When they swept down from the north it was with the belief that they had received a message from God commanding them to subdue the pagan tribes, and they forced the religion of Mohammed upon those whom they conquered. In this way the Hausas, a negro tribe, became followers of Islam, and, travelling far and wide in their capacity as traders, they in their turn enrolled others among 'the faithful.' The pen also has had its share in the propagation of

Mohammedanism. The heathen negro knows nothing of the art of writing, and he puts implicit faith in charms; and when a wandering 'prophet' writes before his eyes some words in mysterious Arabic characters, and tells him that, hung round his neck, they will prove an invaluable charm against all the ills that flesh is heir to, he will believe anything further the 'prophet' likes to tell him. Many a Mohammedan, ignorant of everything else, even of his own religion, but just able to write such a charm, finds that he can live in idleness by thus preying on the credulity of his heathen neighbours, and through the influence of these 'prophets,' who have been stigmatized by Dr. Schweinfurth, a German traveller, as 'incarnations of human depravity,' whole tribes have thrown aside their idols of wood and stone.

It must not be inferred, however, that the converts to Islam are redeemed from Paganism, or even converted to the worship of the one God. Their new religion is a mixture of such Moslem observances as the Ramadan fast, together with the superstitions they profess to have abandoned. In many cases even image-worship is not given up. A missionary in Northern Nigeria wrote in 1907 :—'The people, with few exceptions, are farmers, and although all take part in Mohammedan rites and festivals, many of them, fully one-third, join in heathen feasts. About the same number regularly go through the Mohammedan daily prayers, the remainder doing nothing excepting at festival seasons, when they join in with whatever is going on, either heathen observances or otherwise; they are quite willing to take part in our Christmas rejoicings also. Palm-wine drinking is indulged in to excess by the Mohammedans.'

One of the great occupations of the Mohammedans, especially of the Fulani, in former years was slave-raiding, but slavery was widely prevalent among the Heathen as well. In 1900, however, the Government of Northern Nigeria issued a proclamation which, without abolishing domestic slavery, declared all children born after April 1, 1900, free; forbade the removal of domestic slaves for sale or transfer; and extended to all inhabitants of the Protectorate the penalties for dealing in slaves.

The Hausas.

The Hausas, the only Negro people in Nigeria who are entirely Mohammedan, differ in some respects from the pagan

tribes. They are well clothed, in contrast to many of the Heathen, among whom in certain towns laws are in existence prohibiting the wearing of clothes before a certain age; they are traders rather than agriculturalists; as Mohammedans they possess a certain measure of civilization; and they are free from some of the more degraded and superstitious customs which have served to make the Niger districts notorious among the dark places of the earth.

Pagan Races.

The pagan races, including the Ibos; the Ijos, who occupy the lower reaches of the Niger; and, in Northern Nigeria, the Nupés and Gwaris (who are, however, partly Mohammedan), the Basa and Yoruba peoples, etc., differ among themselves a good deal in their religion. They have a distinct belief in the existence of a Supreme God, and some tribes are said to worship Him directly. The majority, however, regard Him as too great to concern Himself with the affairs of men, and since little is therefore to be feared at His hands, they do not trouble to offer sacrifices to Him, but devote themselves rather to the inferior spirits and gods, who, they think, are more intimately connected with the human race, and endeavour to gain their favour or avert their displeasure, as the case may be.

Infanticide.

Throughout Nigeria, excepting in the western part of the Yoruba Country, the custom of destroying twin children is widely prevalent among the pagan tribes. The motive for this is the belief that it is a divine law that human births should take place only one at a time. Twin children, therefore, are regarded as a proof that the mother has been degraded into a beast. The infants are consequently regarded as beasts, and are put to death in order that the human race may be preserved in its purity, and that the misfortunes which their birth is supposed to betoken may be averted. The hold which this terrible custom has upon the people is shown by the excitement caused when any effort is made to disregard it.

The Ibo gods.

Among the gods of the Ibos are Chi Uku (the great God), in some parts called Chi Neke (the God who creates), i.e. the Supreme Being; inferior guardian deities, who are also called

Chi and are appointed to look after everything happening to individuals; Urai, who is concerned with the affairs of the house and is represented by a pot in which offerings to him are placed; Ikenga, the god of strength, who is worshipped by the people before they go hunting or to war; Ofo, the god of justice; Osisi, a god connected with ancestral worship; Ifejiokū, the farm god; and Ekwu, the goddess of the kitchen, to whom the women specially devote themselves. The Devil, too, is propitiated, and some kindred spirits, while many living animals are venerated as the abode of some of the spirits of the dead; e.g., at Onitsha, the fish of the Nkisi stream; at Obusi, the boa constrictor; at Obuneke, the tortoise; and at Oka, a species of monkey. It should be noted that the Ibos claim that they do not worship the material idol, but only the spirit to which it is consecrated, but at the same time there are definite rules as to the material of which the idol may be made and as to the form which it may assume.

The sacrifices which are offered are of two kinds, either with or without shedding of blood. Should a trifling sacrifice apparently not be accepted, one of greater value is made, the process continuing until at last human beings, regarded as the most valuable offering of all, are the victims. Another reason for human sacrifices besides their value is that the spirits of those sacrificed may convey to the god other offerings which are made at the same time. Thus at Onitsha, in 1864, a prominent man having died, his sons sacrificed a woman that she might act as his servant in the other world, and four years later, the Christians having been fined for relinquishing Heathenism, a female slave was bought with a portion of the money, and then she was sacrificed to atone for the sin of the converts in forsaking the religion of their forefathers. Indeed, it appears that it was customary at that time to offer a little girl annually as an atonement for the sins of the nation. Many persons, too, were practically sacrificed through the custom of accusing aged women of witchcraft, and compelling them, if they would establish their innocence, to submit themselves to the ordeal of drinking poisonous water, which in nine cases out of ten proved fatal.

Religious Beliefs in the Delta.

In the Niger Delta the religion of the people consisted largely in a reverence for snakes and lizards, which were accounted as

'juju' (sacred), and were allowed to roam about at will, while to kill one of them used to be punishable with death. At Bonny the chief juju of the Ibos was the iguana, a thick-tongued lizard; at Brass, the Ijos regarded the boa-constrictor as sacred. The iguanas were suffered to feed undisturbed on the poultry of the place, and the huge snakes were even known to kill and swallow children before the eyes of their parents, who feared to make any attempt at rescue lest they should be accursed for ever. Witchcraft was common. Cannibalism prevailed to a fearful extent. The people of Bonny were wont to behead captives taken in war and other unfortunate persons, and to send their heads to the shrine of their national god, Ikuba, in whose honour a house built from top to bottom of human skulls was erected in the town, while they proceeded with awful revelry to feed upon the headless bodies. Bishop Crowther wrote in 1866:—'On both the platforms in the temple on which the bones and limbs of victims are placed are to be seen fresh bones of three human victims, newly taken as prisoners of war, killed, and devoured. These victims were a man, woman, and child, from the opposite side of the river, relatives of their opponents. Having been caught, killed, and eaten, their bones and skulls were added to the trophies in the temple. The people made no disguise of these deeds; they rather gloried in them. A priestess was seen bearing one of the gory skulls in her hands to be prepared and deposited in its place, while the body was being prepared as an animal sacrifice among the members. Several times I passed by the temple and these fresh limbs caught my eye.'

Moreover, as at Onitsha, it was the custom at some places to offer human sacrifices on the occasion of the death of a person of influence. In one of his journals the Bishop wrote:—'About four days before our arrival at Ohambele, an old rich woman died and was buried. The proceedings of the burial were stated as follows. When the grave was dug, two female slaves were taken, whose limbs were smashed with clubs. Being unable to stir, they were let down into the grave, yet alive, on a mat or bed, on which the corpse of the mistress was laid, and were screened from sight for a time. Two other female slaves were laid hold on and dressed up with best clothes and coral beads. This being done, they were led and paraded about the town to show the public the servants of the rich dead mistress,

whom they would attend in the world of spirits. This was done for two days, when the unfortunate victims were taken to the edge of the grave, and their limbs were also smashed with clubs, and their bodies laid on the corpse of their mistress, and covered up with earth while yet alive.'

In what has been written the present tense has generally been used, but, happily, in some districts the customs of offering human sacrifices, and even twin infanticide, are in large measure things of the past, owing to the influence exerted by Christianity, or to their suppression by British authority. It must be borne in mind, however, that the great extent of the country makes it difficult to police it effectually, and it is almost certain that the customs which have been referred to are still observed, though in secret, in places far removed from Government and mission stations.

Religion of the Gwaris.

Among the Gwaris, who are found by the Kaduna River in Northern Nigeria, there is a great belief in spirits, of which there are two main kinds. The *majiro* are the spirits of male ancestors; each family possesses one, the oldest man in the family being said to be the possessor of it for the time being; when he dies it passes on to the next eldest. The *majiro* are feared, as from them sickness and death are said to come. The worship consists in sacrifices of fowls or sheep and the pouring out of native beer. The blood of the fowl is sprinkled on the grave of the last possessor of the *majiro* who died, together with some beer and a little of the native porridge; afterwards there is a feast, when the rest of the fowl is eaten and beer is drunk. The women are frightened into making the beer by the *felauch*, a piece of wood whirled round at the end of a string, the noise made being said to be the voice of the spirit. The death of a middle-aged or young man or of a woman or child is supposed to be the work of the spirit, and the body is buried outside the town: old people are buried inside or at the door of the house. The *bori* are spirits which come upon women and make them excited and hysterical. Huts are set apart for them inside the house and are entered by the women only. In them, against the wall, there is a lump of earth which is thought to be inhabited by the spirit; over it is deposited a small bowl, in which offerings of honey are placed. The origin of the *bori* is

said to be as follows: If a man shoots an animal in the bush which, when its throat is cut, opens its mouth, it is said to be a bad animal and to have a spirit. This spirit then transfers itself to the man's wife. When the wife dies the spirit is said to skip a generation and transfer itself to the woman's granddaughter. On periodical occasions the women seem to join together, usually on Sundays, for hysterical dancing.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE MISSION.

Preliminary Steps.

When the proposal to send an expedition up the Niger was first mooted, the Committee of the Church Missionary Society saw in the scheme an opportunity for inquiry into the openings for the spread of the Gospel along the banks of the river, and sought and obtained permission for two representatives to accompany it. The men chosen were the Rev. J. F. Schön, a missionary who had seen nine years' service in Sierra Leone, and Samuel Adjai Crowther. The latter was a native of the Yoruba Country, and had been rescued as a boy from the hold of a Portuguese slaver and taken to Sierra Leone, where, after five years at school, he was admitted the first student at Fourah Bay College. After leaving the College he became a schoolmaster, and he was a catechist at the time of the above-named expedition. That, however, as already narrated, ended in failure. When, after the lapse of twelve years, the second expedition was fitted out, Mr. Crowther, who meanwhile had been ordained, was again a member of the party. Largely through his instrumentality, as Dr. Baikie, the leader of the expedition, testified, the venture was a complete success, and everywhere the kings and chiefs were found to be willing to receive Christian teachers. The Committee, on hearing the report of Mr. Crowther's experiences, resolved that as soon as regular steam communication could be established as far as the confluence of the Niger and the Binue a Mission should be set on foot. Meanwhile

Mr. Crowther busied himself with making Scripture translations and compiling a copious vocabulary in Ibo, while Mr. Schön was employed in rendering one of the Gospels and the Acts into the Hausa language.

Beginning of the Mission.

In 1857 the third expedition to the Niger started, and with it went the Revs. S. Crowther and J. C. Taylor, the latter himself an Ibo, who were commissioned to begin the work. The two ships, the *Dayspring* and the *George*, dropped anchor on July 25 off Onitsha, a town with a population of about 13,000, between 150 and 200 miles from the mouth of the river, and Mr. Taylor was stationed there. Mr. Crowther proceeded up river to Idda, where the chief readily granted a site for a mission-station, but no teacher could be left at the time; then on to the Confluence, placing a native who had accompanied the expedition from Sierra Leone at Gbebe as schoolmaster; and on once more to Rabba. A few miles above that town the *Dayspring* was wrecked on a reef and Mr. Crowther accordingly remained at Rabba, a Mohammedan town, improving Mr. Schön's Hausa translations and reducing the Nupé language to writing. By 1859 three stations had been fairly commenced; and Mr. Crowther already looked forward to farther advance.

A Check.

The prospect, from a human point of view, was soon clouded over. Early in 1859 Mr. Taylor was invited to England for conference with the Committee, while Mr. Crowther had occasion to visit Abeokuta. When the latter endeavoured in the summer to return up the river he was told on his arrival at Gbebe that Rabba was closed against missionaries. As he was on his way back to the coast, an onslaught was made on the *Rainbow*, a trading steamer on which he was accommodated, by armed natives of the Delta, who preferred a traffic in slaves to lawful commerce. This incident closed the Niger for a couple of years, but the missionaries, though unable to make their way to their stations, did not waste their time, for while they were waiting for a vessel in which to ascend the river, Mr. Crowther took advantage of the opportunity to investigate the openings for work presented in some of the towns of the Delta. Akassa, at the mouth of the Nun, the main channel by

which the river is approached from the sea, seemed promising, and there Mr. Taylor, together with some teachers from Sierra Leone, took up his abode pending his return to his own station. At length, in July, 1861, a gunboat accompanied by a trading vessel went up to the Confluence. Mr. Crowther found the native teachers at work, though they had suffered some hardships from lack of food, but as they had been long separated from their families he took them with him when he went down to the coast, their places being filled by others.

A memorable Year.

The following year is a memorable one in the history of the Mission. The firstfruits at Gbebe, two men and six women, together with one infant, were baptized by Mr. Crowther on September 14, and a couple of months later Mr. Taylor, who had resumed his post at Onitsha, had the privilege of admitting forty-two persons, including seventeen adults, into the visible Church of Christ. Before long others were baptized, and by the close of 1863 three stations, Akassa, Onitsha, and Gbebe, were occupied; there was a goodly number of converts and inquirers, notwithstanding that they were called upon to suffer some persecution; and the services were well attended. The outlook was so promising that the Committee felt the time had come for the appointment of a bishop for 'the countries beyond the British possessions on the West Coast of Africa.' The royal licence was obtained, Mr. Crowther was selected, and on June 29, 1864, he was consecrated in Canterbury Cathedral, the degree of Doctor of Divinity having been conferred upon him shortly before by the University of Oxford.

New Stations.

Within a month of his consecration Bishop Crowther left for his diocese, and at once visited the stations of the Mission, and confirmed a number of candidates at Gbebe and Onitsha. He found the position of affairs at both those places so satisfactory that he was encouraged to form plans for opening another station about midway between the two, to form a link between them. With that end in view he ordained one of the African teachers, and in 1865 he placed him at Idda. Work was commenced also at Lokoja, within a few miles of Gbebe, but on

the opposite, the western bank of the river, both in consequence of its growing importance as a trade centre, and also in order that the work at the latter station might be transferred thither, should threats of attack which the king of Nupé was making be carried into effect. But even more important plans than these, as the issue proved, were on foot. To understand the circumstances it is necessary to go back about a decade.

Occupation of Bonny.

Somewhere about 1855 the people of Bonny, a town in the Delta, who had long suffered from the despotic rule of their king, William Pepple, rose in revolt against him, and he only escaped with his life by taking refuge upon one of the European hulks trading in the river. The British consul at Fernando Po was sent for, and he, after consultation with the king and the rebellious chiefs, banished the former to Ascension Island. The king forthwith appealed to the British Government, and before long he was called to England to state his case in person. While in this country he attended services in St. Paul's Cathedral and elsewhere and was baptized; and, arriving at the conclusion that England's power and greatness were derived from Christianity, he resolved, should he be allowed to return to his own land, to take with him Christianity and civilization. Receiving from the Government compensation to the amount of £2,000 and also permission to return to Bonny, he proceeded to carry his resolve into execution. He engaged at high salaries a chaplain, schoolmaster, carpenter, gardener, schoolmistress, doctor, and nurse, and chartered a schooner, in which he sailed with them, taking with him implements, books, etc., which he had purchased. On his arrival at Bonny he was reinstated as king, but the Europeans, finding the discomforts of the climate and their new surroundings greater than they had anticipated, within a week started again for England.

Nothing daunted, King William Pepple asked one of the traders to write in his behalf to the Bishop of London, begging him to send a missionary. The letter arrived a week after Bishop Crowther's consecration, and was forwarded by the Bishop of London to the Rev. Henry Venn, then Honorary Secretary of the C.M.S., who arranged that Bishop Crowther should visit the town on his return to Africa. The king gave the bishop a cordial reception, and an agreement was drawn up in

which the latter undertook to send a teacher and the king made himself responsible for half the expenses.

In 1865 Bishop Crowther again went to Bonny, this time accompanied by three African lay agents. Temporary residences were duly assigned to them, a school was opened, and the sowing was begun of the Good Seed which was to yield a bounteous harvest.

Bishop Crowther taken Prisoner.

As Bishop Crowther journeyed about his diocese he was involved now and again in personal danger. Wars were of frequent occurrence, especially on the Upper River, and in 1866 Gbebe was destroyed by two brothers who were fighting for its kingship, and the converts were obliged to take refuge at Lokoja and at Idda. Those who chose the latter town were not long at peace. In the ensuing year, the Bishop having landed near the Confluence to exchange friendly salutations with a chief whom he had known for twenty years, was suddenly taken prisoner by him. A large ransom was demanded. The Europeans and natives of the Confluence, headed by Mr. Fell, the British Consul, immediately went to the rescue of the Bishop and endeavoured by remonstrances to procure his release. Finding the chief inexorable, Mr. Fell returned to his boat and called to Bishop Crowther to run for it too. They shoved off amid a shower of poisoned arrows, one of which struck Mr. Fell, and he died in a few hours. 'I would,' wrote the Bishop, 'had such been the will of God, that I had been shot, and my dead body taken to Lokoja instead of his.' After this experience the Bishop prudently abandoned Idda as a station, since the king of that place refused to guarantee protection to the missionary; indeed, there was grave reason to suspect that he had been a party to the seizure of the Bishop.

Political Troubles.

The fact that when the rescue of Bishop Crowther was effected no punishment was inflicted on his captors served as an encouragement to lawlessness, and soon afterwards three piratical chiefs assembled round Lokoja in the hope of seizing the British merchandise which was there. For eight months the place was besieged, and the pirates only retired when the British vessels approached on their annual visit. The disturbed

state of the country led to the withdrawal of the British Consulate. The king of Bida, the paramount Nupé authority in that part, thereupon took the station under his protection and sent some Mohammedan soldiers to serve as a guard. But the remedy proved almost worse than the disease, for the soldiers, after attacking some of the surrounding tribes, turned against the Christians, selling some into slavery and driving others from the town. The refugees returned a few years later, but it was not until 1876 that peace was restored.

An Edict against Christianity.

Just about the time that the troubles began at Lokoja persecution broke out at Onitsha, where the work had so long proceeded without any untoward incident. The steady increase in the number of converts aroused the jealousy of the heathen authorities, and the fixed determination of a daughter-in-law of the king and of a daughter of an influential chief to receive Christian baptism, which was proof against all efforts to dissuade them, brought matters to a crisis. The Christians were forbidden to assemble for public worship and were fined, and soon afterwards were ordered to quit the country. That edict, however, was cancelled before long, and the growing influence of Christianity was seen in the success of the efforts of the missionaries and merchants to save the human beings destined for sacrifice on the occasion of the king's funeral, fifty-three out of the sixty being spared.

Persecution in the Delta.

In the Niger Delta more serious disturbances took place than either at Lokoja or Onitsha. H.M.S. *Investigator* was attacked in 1867 by a number of natives, who killed some and injured others of the crew, and a little later civil war broke out at Bonny, which lasted for four years, and led many of the people to migrate. These political troubles were succeeded by others directly connected with missionary work. The occupation, in 1868, of Tuwon, the seaport of Nembe, which lies some thirty miles up the Brass River, was quietly followed by an ingathering of souls which aroused the hostility of the Heathen. Some of the converts were imprisoned; some were whipped; some starved; some fined; but only three denied their faith. There was a recrudescence of the persecution in 1874, and in that same year

the chiefs at Bonny began to manifest their antagonism in acute form. Indignant that their inferiors should despise what they themselves worshipped, they forbade their slaves to attend the church services, alleging that such of them as were adherents of the Mission were becoming independent and disobedient, and refusing to do any work, even that of absolute necessity, on Sunday.

Martyrdom of Joshua Hart.

Before long an incident occurred which showed that the enemies of the Gospel were in earnest. A slave of 'Captain Hart,' one of the many Africans who had assumed European names and a ringleader of the persecuting party, had been baptized by the name of 'Joshua,' and was therefore known as Joshua Hart, as the slaves took the surnames of their masters. This man was charged with disregarding the order issued by the chiefs, and was given the choice between taking part in heathen rites or eating things which had been sacrificed to idols. Refusing to do either the one or the other, he was over and over again tossed up in the air by four men and suffered to fall with great force on the ground. Sorely bruised though he was, Joshua Hart held fast to his resolution. 'If my master,' said he to some chiefs who urged him to recant, 'requires me to do any work for him, however hard, I will try my best to do it; but if he requires me to eat of things sacrificed to the gods, I will never do it.' Left to the tender mercies of his master, he was then bound hand and foot and taken in a canoe to be drowned. The slave in his distress called upon the Saviour, which only further enraged his master. 'See,' said he to one of the chiefs who were present, 'he whom I am about to kill continues to do the same thing against which we are speaking!' Then, turning to the convert, he exclaimed, 'You be praying again? Then I'll show you what prayer be!' Thus saying, he ordered the victim to be hurled into the water. But the body did not sink. Joshua was therefore taken out of the water and once more asked if he would recant. On his refusal he was again thrown into the river, and when he came to the surface his skull was smashed with a paddle, and his body thrust through with a sharp-pointed pole. So perished the proto-martyr of the Delta Church.

He was not the only sufferer. Others of the converts were confined in irons, deprived of food, stripped almost naked, and

exposed in the bush night and day to the constant torments of sand-flies and mosquitoes. Of two of these the Rev. (now Archdeacon) D. C. Crowther wrote:—'Pardon, gifts, and promotion were offered should they recant, but, if not, they were told their sufferings would be intensified. To this message one of the imprisoned converts calmly replied, "Tell the master I thank him for his kindness: he himself knows that I never refused to perform duties required of me at home. But as regards turning back to heathen worship, *that* is out of my power, for Jesus has taken charge of my heart and padlocked it—the key is with Him. So you see it is impossible for me to open it without Him." The other answered that they need not try to tempt him with any earthly offers, and added, with reference to the threats of prolonging and intensifying his sufferings, "I have made up my mind, God helping me, to be in chains, should it so please the Lord, even till the coming of the judgment day."'

After some months of torment, in which they were sustained by their simple faith, these men were released in deference to a strong remonstrance on the part of the European traders and ship captains. They were more fortunate than another man who, in consequence of his persistency in declining to eat of things offered to idols, was bound and taken to the plantations; there he was kept for six days in the intense tropical heat without a morsel of food or a drop of water, until his long-drawn agony was mercifully ended by death.

A bright Record.

The period 1865–80 may well be regarded as the era of persecution, for although from time to time afterwards some endeavour was made to forcibly withstand the advance of Christianity, it was never on a large scale or of long duration. But while the period was an era of persecution it was also an era of progress. On the Upper River many members of the Bunu tribe were baptized; Kipo Hill, near Egga, was occupied; and work was resumed at Gbebe. In the Ibo country several outstations, including Osamare, twenty miles to the south, and Asaba, on the western bank of the river, were opened, and there were some signs that the softening influences of Christianity were being felt. In the Delta, Christianity, so far from being crushed out of existence, made great strides forward. The

services at Bonny were attended by large congregations; in one year (1880) sixty-seven adults received baptism, and the juju temple was reported to be fast going to ruins; while at Tuwon a wholesale destruction of idols had been witnessed, and the work had spread thence to Nembe, where the king himself received baptism. The statistics for the year 1880 showed that, besides the Bishop, nine clergy were engaged in the Mission, eleven stations were occupied, and the Christian adherents numbered about 1,000, a remarkable record for some twenty years' work among such degraded tribes. This had been accomplished, too, entirely by African agency, for only two Europeans had been assigned to the Niger, one of whom was employed to undertake the secularities of the Mission, while the other acted as engineer of the steamer which had been sent out to enable the Bishop to travel freely about his diocese.

CHAPTER III.

TROUBLE AND PROGRESS.

The Niger Troubles.

The 'time of wealth' is fraught with peril no less real than the 'time of tribulation.' Work which trial leaves unscathed often fails to stand the test of success. Perhaps, however, the case should be stated rather differently. Success brings in the unworthy who are deterred from seeking admission to the Church when hardship and ostracism are the lot of those who do so, and it also lacks that stimulus to the soul to the casting of itself upon God which is the one secret of stability and security.

When the 'Niger troubles' are spoken of, it is not the era of persecution which is referred to, but the period of distress and anxiety following the large ingatherings which have just engaged our attention. In those troubles the Mission as a whole was concerned, though perhaps they are generally thought of as especially connected with Bonny. In the midst of the outward prosperity at that station, reports which reached home caused misgivings to be entertained as to the spiritual condition of

the Church on the Niger. There were not sufficient agents to shepherd the converts, notably in the Ibo country; it was difficult for Bishop Crowther, who had his headquarters at Lagos, to supervise the workers adequately; and there was reason to fear that discipline was lax and that a low state of morality was tolerated among those who were Christians. In 1879, therefore, it was deemed desirable to strengthen the hands of the Bishop by the appointment of a Niger Finance Committee, composed partly of Europeans and partly of Africans, with a European clerical secretary, who also acted in that capacity for the Yoruba Mission. The lapse of time revealed that the state of affairs was even more serious than had been supposed. Two agents, one a schoolmaster at Onitsha, and the other a man who had been dismissed by Bishop Crowther for misconduct but had been re-engaged as a storekeeper, were convicted in the civil courts of cruel treatment of a girl which issued in her death, and were sentenced to long terms of penal servitude; and others, chiefly at isolated stations, were found to have engaged in trading or to have fallen into gross sin and were disconnected by the Society. From some parts of the Mission gloomy accounts of the condition of the Native Church were received, especially from Onitsha and the stations on the Upper River. Archdeacon Henry Johnson, who had been appointed in 1878 to exercise supervision under the Bishop over the work at these places (Archdeacon Dandeson Crowther being assigned the same functions in the Delta), wrote in the 'eighties of a 'lamentable declension' at Onitsha as having occurred, attributing it to the 'canker of polygamy,' which was 'eating out the spiritual heart of the Church'; and of the prospect at Lokoja, which for some time had been overcast, as being 'more gloomy than ever.' At length it was determined not to be content even with the step which had meanwhile been taken of appointing a secretary who could devote the whole of his time to the Niger, but to adopt measures often advocated by the Bishop, and send out a band of European missionaries, some to labour side by side with their African brethren in the Ibo country, and others to set on foot more definite efforts than had previously been made to win for Christ the Moslems of the Hausa States.

The advent of the European missionaries, the leaders among whom, together with the Bishop and two of the African clergy, formed a committee for the management of the Mission, was

followed by stringent measures of reform, some of which were carried by the Europeans in the face of the opposition of their colleagues. A time of great anxiety and prolonged investigation by the Parent Committee succeeded. The Committee's decisions did not give full satisfaction to either party, and Bonny and its out-stations declared themselves financially independent of the C.M.S., and repudiated the co-operation of European missionaries. The Delta Pastorate was formally inaugurated in April, 1892.

Death of Bishops Crowther and Hill.

These anxieties told heavily upon those most closely connected with the work. The Rev. J. A. Robinson and Mr. Graham Wilmot Brooke, the joint leaders of the new effort to reach the Mohammedans of the Soudan, passed away on June 25, 1891, and March 5, 1892, respectively; and on December 31, 1891, after a long and honoured life, full of strenuous work, Bishop Crowther was called to his eternal rest. The Rev. J. S. Hill, who had been accepted for service in the Mission, was appointed to succeed the last-named, and, after a preliminary visit to the coast, he was consecrated in St. Paul's Cathedral on June 29, 1893, two Africans, the Revs. C. Phillips and I. Oluwole, being consecrated as assistant-Bishops at the same time. Five months later Bishop Hill sailed for his diocese with Mrs. Hill and a large party of missionaries, some for the Yoruba Country and some for the Niger. They arrived at Lagos on December 13. Before long Miss Maxwell was seized with fever and was invalided home. Then, on January 1, 1894, the Bishop became ill. On January 5 he died. Mrs. Hill passed away the next day. On the 17th and 21st respectively the Revs. E. W. Mathias and A. E. Sealey, who had proceeded on their journey to the Niger, died, one on the Forcados River and the other at Warri; and on the 23rd, Miss Mansbridge, broken down with the strain of nursing, was called to her rest. Of the party of seven who sailed for the Niger Mission five had died within two months and one had been invalided home. As it was of great importance that a successor to Bishop Hill should be appointed at once, the Archbishop of Canterbury waived his claim to have two names submitted to him to choose from. The Rev. Herbert Tugwell, Secretary of the Yoruba Mission, was nominated by the Committee; the nomination was instantly accepted; Mr. Tugwell was telegraphed for; and on March 4, 1894, he was consecrated

in the chapel of Lambeth Palace. He at once prosecuted, with the help of Archdeacon Dobinson, the efforts for the reconciliation of the Delta Pastorate which Bishop Hill had begun, and with such success that in October, 1896, the Parent Committee were able to approve a revised draft constitution for the Pastorate which had been submitted to them, and the names of the clergy, which had disappeared from the C.M.S. Annual Report, were again included in it.

Establishment of British Rule.

About this time many important steps were taken towards the establishment of British rule in the country. In 1888 the Royal Niger Company, in whose hands the government of the Niger territories lay, officially prohibited human sacrifices. The decree was defied at Asaba, and an attack on the quarters of the constabulary followed, which led to the demolition of a part of the town, including the great idol temple in its centre, and the liberation of the slaves who were kept in a village by themselves in readiness to be offered up. Nine years later, in January, 1897, Bida was occupied by a little force of Hausas under British officers, and the long-dreaded Nupé cavalry were dispersed—events which the *Times* newspaper compared with the battle of Plassy in their probable influence on the future of the country.

Various punitive expeditions, too, have been rendered necessary from time to time by acts of violence and cruelty. In the year just mentioned one was sent to Benin to avenge the massacre of the British acting-Consul and several other Europeans; Bida had to be punished in 1900 for making raids on the people of the neighbourhood; Aro-Chuku, probably the most powerful centre of pagan superstition in West Africa, visited annually by pilgrims from great distances who sought advice from its oracle, was occupied by British troops in the following year, and its 'charnel-house of fetish lore' destroyed; and in 1904 a rising in the Asaba district had to be suppressed by an armed force.

Extension.

The events which have been thus briefly narrated have facilitated the extension and consolidation of the Mission which have been the distinguishing features of Bishop Tugwell's episcopate. In 1897, Akabe and Kpata, both in the neighbour-

hood of Lokoja, but on the eastern side of the river, were occupied. In January, 1900, a party of missionaries left Lagos with a view to setting work on foot in the Hausa States; eventually, after two years' almost fruitless labour at Gierku, they settled at Zaria, in the heart of the Western Soudan. Since then the work at Onitsha has been extended to Iyi Enu, near Ogidi (1903), Oka (1904), Umunya and Obusi (1905; the latter re-occupied), and Ebu (1906), the last-named sixty miles to the south-east; from Asaba several out-stations have been opened and Idumuje Ugboko has received British missionaries; from Zaria the work has branched out to Kuta (1906); Panyam, in the Bauchi highlands, was occupied in 1907 by a representative of the Cambridge University Missionary Party—a band of Cambridge men pledged either to go forth into the mission-field or to support those of their number who do so; while in the Delta a station was opened at Kaiyama in 1904, and one at Patani three years later. In these forward movements help has been rendered by agents selected by the West Indian C.M.S. Council, and trained under their superintendence at Mico College, Kingston, Jamaica.

Native Church Organization.

While efforts have thus been made to extend the work, the importance of consolidating it by the development of Native Church organization has not been overlooked. At Onitsha and in the neighbourhood of that town sufficient advance had been made to justify the formation in 1904 of a provisional Ibo Pastorate, which in the following year was placed on a permanent footing, and now includes seven congregations. In 1906 a Constitution for the diocese of Western Equatorial Africa was drawn up, by which a Synod, a Diocesan Board, and District Councils were established. The 'districts' correspond, in relation to the diocese, to important rural deaneries in England, and each is under the immediate government of a District Council—composed of the clergy and other agents with representatives of their congregations—which supervises the work, holds the sustentation fund from which the clergy and agents are paid, gathers the parochial contributions to a central fund for the district, and fixes scales of pay, etc. Provision is made for the control of 'districts' in outlying parts of the diocese by Boards and Commissions acting in those parts for the Synod. The Delta Pastorate now occupies the position of a District

Council under the Constitution of the diocese, and in all probability the Ibo Pastorate will eventually follow that example.

Bible Translation.

Another measure which calls for notice has been the preparation of a Union Version of the Bible in Ibo by Archdeacon T. J. Dennis. Three different translations have been in use according to the dialects of Onitsha, the headquarters of the C.M.S., and of Bonny and Ungwana, the headquarters of the Niger Delta Pastorate and the United Free Church of Scotland Mission respectively; as a result, however, of a conference of representatives of the above three Missions, held under the auspices of the British and Foreign Bible Society, steps were taken in 1906 to replace the existing versions by a new one. The translation of the New Testament was finished in 1908. Several books of the Bible have also been rendered into Ijo, Nupé, and Hausa.

The Evidence of Statistics.

Statistics are not by any means the most satisfactory evidence of progress, but nevertheless they have a certain value and afford some indication as to whether or no advance has been made. It is interesting, therefore, to compare those for December, 1893, i.e. immediately before the death of Bishop Hill, with those for December, 1907. Excluding for the moment the figures for the Niger Delta Pastorate which are not now furnished, they show that the number of stations has increased from five to seventeen; of British missionaries from ten to thirty-four. In the Ibo Country the number of baptized Christians has risen from 342 to 1,632, and of catechumens from 176 to 1,043; while the contributions of the people have risen from £34 to £584. Moreover, at Bonny and the older stations of the Delta Pastorate (which form the special sphere at present assigned by Bishop Tugwell to Bishop James Johnson, who was consecrated in 1900) and in the Missions of that Pastorate there are now 3,300 baptized Christians, as compared with 868 at the end of 1893. The one marked instance of falling off is at Tuwon and Nembe, only lately included among the Pastorate stations, where only 270 adherents are returned as compared with 518 at the earlier date, and just 2,000 eleven years earlier still.

CHAPTER IV.

STATIONS IN THE DELTA.

1. Bonny.

The occupation of Bonny in 1865, of which some account has been given in the second chapter, was not immediately followed by any large ingathering of souls. Indeed almost from the outset opposition was experienced, for no sooner had a few children been induced to attend the school which was opened, and one or two chiefs, with a certain show of enthusiasm, begun to come for instruction in reading and writing, than a revival of juju-worship took place, and the skull temple, which had been allowed to fall into a dilapidated condition, was thoroughly repaired. But the king and chiefs were in the main friendly, and Bishop Crowther was allowed, in 1866, to select any site he pleased for permanent mission-buildings. When he chose one called by the natives a 'bad juju-bush,' where it had been customary to throw newly-born twins and leave them to die, a cry was raised that the gods would be displeased and take vengeance on the audacious intruders, and no one would assist in clearing the site; but, on the other hand, no opposition was offered to the Bishop when, calmly replying that he would settle with the juju, he proceeded to take the preliminary steps to the erection of a school. Soon something more than a benevolent neutrality was shown by the native authorities, for the king, George Pepple, who had succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, actively co-operated in the removal of abuses, and persuaded the chiefs to prohibit the destruction of twin children and declare the iguanas to be no longer juju. A great destruction of those reptiles ensued, and lest any should afterwards claim that he had taken no part in their extermination, some of the blood of the iguanas was sprinkled in every well of the town (reminding Bishop Crowther of the action of Moses in making the children of Israel drink of the water in which the powdered remnants of the golden calf had been thrown), thus indicating that all had concurred in their destruction and also in the use of them as food.

The first Ingathering.

But though some of the more barbarous practices had been discountenanced, there were no visible conversions, and when, in 1869, civil war broke out and the school had to be discontinued, there was little sign of the time of blessing which was in store. The ordination of the catechist, however, and the advent of Bishop Crowther's son, the Rev. (now Archdeacon) D. C. Crowther, to the station, were soon followed by a large increase in the number of Heathen attending the services; the class of candidates for baptism also grew; and in 1872 ten adults were received into the visible Church. This success aroused the hostility of the chiefs, who as a body held aloof from the missionaries. A good example was set them by King George Pepple and his brothers, who not only were regular attendants at church, but even at times taught in the Sunday-school; but though the king's title to the throne was generally acknowledged, he had no more than nominal control over the chiefs, and when the latter proposed to adopt forcible measures to stay the progress of Christianity, his remonstrances were unable to restrain them. Persecution, as already described,* broke out and continued for some three years.

For a time the enemy seemed to have triumphed. Some of the baptized Christians, it is true, went to the mission-house by night, and a few others secretly met together for worship in a clearing in the bush, but the congregation, which had numbered 350, dwindled down to a handful of school-children. Mr. D. C. Crowther, however, was able to hold meetings Sunday by Sunday in the houses of the chiefs, and in May, 1878, he and such of his people as could be gathered together met for special prayer in behalf, not of themselves alone, but also of their persecutors. About the same time the favourite wife of 'Captain Hart,' herself a cruel enemy of the Christians, was laid low by sickness. Large sums of money were spent to propitiate the idols, and the heathen priests loudly predicted her recovery, but the disease proved fatal. Mr. Crowther visited the bereaved husband: his kindly words made a deep impression, and Captain Hart soon afterwards persuaded his brother chiefs, even if they did not formally repeal the persecuting laws, yet to cease to enforce them. In June a few persons summoned up enough courage to attend the services, and a month or two later

* See p. 21.

King George Pepple, returning from England, publicly gave thanks in church for his preservation during his voyage. The example thus set was promptly followed, and on Christmas Day a congregation of 800 assembled, numbers having to stand outside the church for lack of room.

Examples of the Power of the Gospel.

Many striking instances of the power of the Gospel were now witnessed. Captain Hart, on his death-bed in 1879, directed that all his idols should be destroyed; two canoe-loads of them were broken and thrown into the river, one idol only being preserved by the Bishop and afterwards sent to Salisbury Square. Another cruel opponent openly professed faith in Christ and described himself as 'the Saul who became Paul and took off his hat for Christ, Whom he had fought and hoped to conquer, but Who had conquered him.' He became the defender of the faith which he had so sorely persecuted, and when his time came to die his last words were, 'Tell the minister when he comes that I die in Christ.' Even the priests of the old Heathenism transferred their allegiance. One, whose duty it had been to destroy twins and cleanse the town of the defilement which their birth was supposed to cause, and who, when the first attempt to rescue any of these unhappy children was made, headed a mob of fifty men armed with clubs and cutlasses in an attack on the mission-house, was baptized and confirmed; and another, who had been the custodian of the temple of skulls, renounced his priestly office and enrolled himself as an inquirer. On Whit Sunday, 1879, the first adult baptisms for four years took place, eleven converts who had stood firm throughout the persecution being then received into the Church. Soon the congregation rose to 1,000, while in nearly half the houses of the town family prayer was held both morning and evening. Moreover, the Gospel spread to outlying districts. A village opposite Bonny, on the other side of the river, became known as 'the Land of Israel' because there was not an idol to be found in it, and it served as a refuge for any persons who might meet with persecution at the hands of the chiefs still devoted to Heathenism; and an interesting work sprang up at Okrika, about thirty miles in the interior, through the instrumentality of a juju priest who was impressed with what he saw of Christianity during his visits to Bonny.

A critical Moment.

Towards the end of 1881 another attempt to check the onward march of Christianity was resolved on at Bonny by the hostile chiefs, and the edicts against church-going were revived. Anxious to avoid any steps which might lead to an outbreak of civil war, Bishop Crowther, who arrived at the town from the Upper River just at the critical moment, desired the converts to remain quietly at home for a Sunday or two while he discussed matters with the hostile chiefs. Week after week passed without his succeeding in inducing them to meet him, and at length the Christians, waxing impatient, determined to pay no attention to the edicts and assembled in large numbers in St. Stephen's Church. Two of them were arrested and threatened with death. The others gathered round, and cried, 'We too are guilty; kill us also.' Their determined spirit dismayed the chiefs; the prohibition was withdrawn, and the services once more became well attended. The troubles, however, were not yet quite at an end, for a year or two later, apparently owing to political quarrels among the chiefs, King George Pepple was deposed; the Bishop and Archdeacon Crowther, charged with interference in local politics, were refused permission to reside in the town; and the old edicts were once more put into execution. Eventually the consul was obliged to intervene. Early in 1887 the factious chiefs were fined, the king reinstated, and Archdeacon Crowther invited to return.

The final cessation of persecution was followed by so great an increase in the congregation that it was felt that a new church was required. There were two churches at Bonny: one, St. Stephen's, was used by the native converts, and the other, St. Clement's, by the shipping population, Europeans and English-speaking Africans. The latter was opened in 1873, and has exercised considerable indirect influence on the natives, for it has served to correct the idea that Christianity is for the black man only, and that the white man needs no religion. It was St. Stephen's, however, which required enlarging, or rather replacing, for it had become unsafe. The converts gave nearly £2,000 towards the fund for the purchase and erection of an iron church, and in January, 1889, Bishop Crowther dedicated St. Stephen's Cathedral, as it is called, in the presence of some 8,000 people. In the previous year the skull temple had been

finally demolished, and the two old wooden idols, the two brazen iguanas (it was said, of Birmingham manufacture), and the two ivory tusks on which the blood of all the human victims was poured and in which the spirits of their departed ancestors were supposed to reside, together with other relics, had been sent to England.

Missionary Work of the Native Church.

This happy state of affairs was shortly succeeded by the Niger troubles,* which were not disposed of until 1896, after a couple of visits had been paid to the Delta by Bishop Tugwell. Since that date regular reports have not been furnished to the Society, but such news as has been received has told of gradual but steady extension. For example: soon after the punitive expedition to Aro-Chuku in 1901 † the Conference of the Pastorate resolved to occupy both that town and Bende. Unfortunately, however, there were no trained agents available for the purpose. To meet the difficulty an appeal was put forth for offers from lay members of the Delta Church to go four at a time for a period of two months to preach and to teach. Two communicants from Bonny and two from Opobo responded, and were cordially received by the chiefs of Bende and Aro-Chuku, who expressed the hope that before long permanent teachers would take up their residence among them. Work has been set on foot, too, at seven mission-stations or districts connected with the Pastorate, all of them lying in the Central Province, and at the end of 1907 there were upwards of 100 baptized Christians and nearly 1,000 inquirers to be found at them. The stations include Warri, the chief town of the Province, Sapele, and Benin city, where sixteen adults, one of them the wife of an ex-king and another a princess, were baptized in the year named.

Indigenous Movements.

The occupation of some places has been the result of an indigenous movement towards Christianity. Bile, a town between Bonny and New Calabar, is a case in point. The people are all fishermen. Through their frequent intercourse with Bonny a few of them heard the Gospel. They carried it to their friends at home, and they in their turn, when visiting Bonny or other

* See p. 23. † See p. 26.

mission-stations, took advantage of the opportunity to hear for themselves. Then they invited Bonny Christians who happened to pass through their town on Saturdays to stop and preach to them instead of returning home. A little bamboo shed was erected to serve as a chapel. This led to the persecution of the six men who were the leaders of the movement, but the only result was that many others became adherents, and when (in 1904) Archdeacon Crowther visited the town he found that a neat iron church had been erected by the converts, fifteen of whom, after due examination, he was able to baptize.

One unsatisfactory feature of the work is that even now, more than forty years since it was begun, the majority of the chiefs hold aloof from Christianity. There are other weaknesses as well, but steps have been taken to remedy them, and a marked spiritual revival which took place among the delegates attending the annual meeting of the Pastorate Conference held at Okrika in December, 1906, and found its outcome both in the reclamation of backsliders and in ingatherings from among the Heathen, affords good ground for hopefulness concerning the future.

2. Opobo and Queenstown.

At the former of these stations, both of which lie on the Opobo River, work was begun in 1890. It made such rapid progress that six years later a congregation of 900 was reported as meeting for worship at St. Paul's Church, Opobo, while one a third of that size was connected with St. John's, Queenstown. Six years later still it was stated by Bishop Johnson that although there were thousands of Heathen at Opobo and only about 1,100 Christians of all ages, the house of human skulls devoted to 'Ikuba,' the great divinity of the Ibo country, had been left to fall into decay since the death of its last official keeper.

3. Okrika.

Okrika is a large market-town in the interior, thirty miles from Bonny. Its chiefs and people, influenced by what they saw when they went to Bonny, without ever having been visited by a Christian teacher built a church to seat 300 people, got a schoolboy from Brass to read the service on Sundays, and sent to the Bishop to ask for a teacher. Archdeacon Crowther accordingly visited the town in 1880, and a little later, the chiefs having given ten puncheons of oil as a contribution towards

expenses, an African clergyman was appointed to the station. Sixty-two adults were baptized in 1886, but two years afterwards the barbarous ferocity of the inhabitants was sadly manifested. A neighbouring tribe with whom they had some dispute were invited to conference. They came unarmed, trusting in the good faith of their hosts. Suddenly they were attacked, captured, and to the number of 100 were murdered, and their bodies eaten. Only eleven, through being allotted to chiefs who were adherents of the Mission, escaped the terrible fate. The pastor did all he could by remonstrances to prevent the crime, and he and his people for some time were in danger because they disdained all complicity in it. The congregation, numbering some 220, joined the Delta Pastorate on its formation, but the station afterwards fell on evil days, and in 1896 it was reported that for three years there had been no resident agent. Two or three Christian chiefs conducted the Sunday services, but the old mission-house, left without a human inhabitant, had fallen a prey to the elements and become a haunt of wild beasts. A revival happily has since taken place at this station.*

4. Ogbonoma.

In August, 1874, just before the outburst of persecution at Bonny, a forward movement was made by the occupation of New Calabar. The king and chiefs contributed £200 towards the expenses of opening the station, a boarding-school was set on foot, and some inquirers soon came forward; but in 1880 war broke out with Bonny, and the work was brought to a stand-still. Eight years elapsed before it could be resumed, and then not New Calabar itself, but Ogbonoma, a few miles distant, was occupied. The people were described as shrewd and intelligent through their long dealings with European traders, but were said to be more addicted to juju-worship than any of the other tribes of the Delta. Leopards (until the depredations of one of those animals caused them to be deposed from their position in the esteem of the people) and other beasts, and even the figure-head of a ship, were venerated, and ancestor-worship was common. The authorities early attempted to prevent attendance at the services. Their antagonism increased with the success of the work, and when, after four years' labour, six adults, the first-fruits of the station, were baptized, two of them would have been

* See p. 34.

killed or sold into slavery but for the intervention of the European traders; while two inquirers died under circumstances so suspicious that the people were led to exclaim, 'You call us to come to church, and when we come we are killed.'

Long Juju.

From Ogbonoma the Gospel spread to the neighbouring township of Buguma, and there, too, persecution began. The Christian leaders were singled out and told to prepare to go to the Long Juju. If the juju approved of their worshipping God they would come back; if not they would be lost. An appeal to the consul by the Rev. J. D. Garrick, the African clergyman in charge of the station, saved the converts from the doom which threatened them, but later on several of them were placed in irons.

The above was no idle threat. No one who went to the Long Juju was known to return; he was either sold to some distant place as a slave, or met with a worse fate. What was the alternative to slavery is more than suggested by the description given by a correspondent of Reuter's who visited the home of the Long Juju, near Aro-Chuku, just after its capture and prior to its destruction by a British expedition in 1901. He wrote:—'The approach to the Long Juju is through dense bush, which gradually becomes thicker and thicker until one arrives at the entrance of a deep, oval-shaped pit seventy feet deep, sixty yards long, and fifty yards wide. One then climbs down the precipitous sides of the rock into a narrow gorge and into running water, up which one wades, passing under two fences, until one finally comes to a place where the water comes out of the solid rock in two big streams, which unite below a small island, on which are two altars, one made of many trade guns, stuck muzzle downwards into the ground and topped with skulls, the other of wood and supporting more skulls, bones, feathers, blood, eggs, and other votive offerings to the juju, including the head of the last victim. Over the rock, where is the source of the water, is a roof of human skulls, with a curtain, the top part of which is composed of cloths and the lower part of native matting, screening the rock and hanging just short of the water's edge. The lower portions of the rock, composing the other sides of this crater, are draped with mats only. On the left of the entrance, centrally situated and opposite the island, has been hewn out of the rock a flat-topped ledge for sacrificial purposes. The water,

about twelve inches deep, is full of tame, grey-coloured fish about two feet in length, with long suckers and glaring yellow eyes, which have a most bizarre appearance, as they glide noiselessly through the clear water in the dim light of this charnel-house of fetish lore, which is roofed with densely intertwined creepers. These fish are regarded as sacred. On the left of the exit lies another pile of human skulls and other relics of the juju rites, and on the right is the last sacrifice—a white goat, trussed up in the branches of a palm-tree, and starving to death.'

After the events narrated above Ogbonoma was left for some time without a resident agent, but in 1898 the hostile chiefs promised to withdraw their opposition, and the station was re-opened and handed over to the Delta Pastorate, from which the converts had previously held aloof. The chiefs were even better than their word, for they subscribed towards the erection of a new church, and twenty-one of them were present when it was opened in 1900. At Buguma, too, the king and chiefs have expressed a wish to build a church, and have undertaken to publicly proclaim religious liberty for their people.

5. Tuwon.

As early as in 1861 visits were paid to the Brass River from Akassa by the Rev. J. C. Taylor to conduct services for the European merchants and sailors who were found there, but the beginning of work among the natives was of later date. One day in 1867, as Bishop Crowther was leaving Akassa in a boat, he met Ockiya, one of the two kings of Brass, with three large war-canoes, and was greeted with the words, 'God-man, God-man, come near; I wish to speak to you. I have been asking for you.' In the conversation which ensued the king said that he was anxious that Christian work should be set on foot among his people. The Bishop replied that requests to that effect had already reached him from others, and that he was then actually on his way to Brass River to see what arrangements could be made. Ockiya promised to meet the Bishop there, and eventually he and his chiefs gave a site for a mission-house and promised a third (£100) of the estimated expense of the necessary buildings. Accordingly, in the following year, a lay agent was stationed at Tuwon, which lies at the mouth of the river.

Snake-worship.

The people were found to be addicted to cannibalism and to snake-worship, and the length to which their veneration of

the boa-constrictor was carried was dwelt upon by the catechist in his early reports. He wrote, 'The people cannot rear domestic animals, as the snakes devour all. The reptiles even at times swallow children, if a woman happen to leave her infant alone in the house. Then, instead of speaking of the evil that the snake has done, they attribute the evil to the mother; they say she has done some wrong to the juju, and that therefore it has swallowed the child. If a slave kills one of these boa-constrictors, the master has to pay a puncheon of oil and the slave is put to death. If a person's house catches fire, and a juju is found burnt in the flames, the owner, in addition to the other losses he has to bear, must pay a puncheon or the value of a slave.'

Persecution fails to attain its Object.

Not a very promising soil, this, for cultivation; nevertheless the Gospel seed soon took root, and within three years fifty converts had been won. Then persecution began. Charged with refusing to do sacrifice, and so provoking the anger of the gods and bringing about a visitation of small-pox, the converts were severely punished. Chief Spiff, a candidate for baptism and a confidential friend of Ockiya, was specially singled out for attack, and though he was not personally molested, he was heavily fined, and his daughter was forcibly carried off into slavery. After about a year the persecution subsided, and when the statistics were drawn up it was found that only three persons had recanted, and the number of Christians, instead of diminishing, had nearly trebled. Before long, however, the hostile movement broke out afresh, countenanced or at least acquiesced in by King Ockiya. Some of the converts were fined, and Chief Spiff had to leave his home and take refuge at the mission-house; but again the converts rallied, the church had to be enlarged to accommodate the increasing congregation, and at the end of 1874 there were no fewer than 156 candidates for baptism. In the following year Chief Spiff, who had meanwhile been baptized, was confirmed, and among those present at the service was another chief, at one time his great persecutor, but now, brought low by troubles which proved to him that his own gods were powerless to protect or help, himself a candidate for baptism. Ockiya now renounced Heathenism and became a regular attendant at the services, and on Advent Sunday, 1879, a fortnight,

as it proved, before his death, he was admitted into the visible Church.

Wholesale Destruction of Idols.

About the same time the chiefs and people unanimously agreed to destroy their idol temple, and at once carried their resolution into effect. On every side objects of family worship were cast away until very few remained, and the only priestess who was left, being deprived of applicants for divination, was hard put to it to gain a livelihood. A new iron church was opened in 1886. The cost, nearly £1,000, was met entirely by the subscriptions of the people, one chief, who had already given £240, bringing a similar sum with the words, 'When our Master, Jesus, calls, no one should withhold.' The offertories at the opening services, amounting to £30, were transmitted to the C.M.S. as a token of the gratitude of the people.

Declension.

The work proceeded without much incident beyond the baptism each year of from twenty to fifty adults, but the condition of the congregation was not satisfactory. Some of the people relapsed into idolatry, many of the young men became polygamists, the attendance at the services fell off, and in 1892 the number of baptized Christians was not much more than half what it had been a decade before. Part of the decrease was undoubtedly due to the diminished importance of the town, which, when the Royal Niger Company received its charter, had elected to be excluded from its territories, with the consequence that trade was diverted to Bonny; but much was caused by the excommunications which were rendered necessary by the lives of the members of the congregation. Low water, however, was not yet reached. Smarting under a sense of wrong through being shut out from their natural markets, the people attacked the Company's depôt at Akassa, and killed and devoured a number of the prisoners who were captured. Tuwon was burnt as a punishment, and the minds of the people became embittered against the white man, and against Christianity, which they regarded as his religion. The leaders of the juju superstitions were in greater request than ever, and sacrifices became more common. There has been but little revival since, notwithstanding the efforts of the English missionaries, both men and women,

who have been appointed to the station. The prevalence of domestic slavery has been one great difficulty in the way of the progress of the Gospel, and the unwillingness of the young men to seek Christian marriage another. Mr. T. E. Alvarez wrote in 1903:—'All power being vested in the hands of the big chiefs (almost all of whom are polygamists, and therefore excluded from full Church membership), their domestic slaves or the members of their households who are full members of the Church and therefore entitled to sit upon the Church committees from which the heads of their homes are excluded, are found to be influenced in their decisions by the fear of displeasing the heads of their houses. Another important point which is a direct result of the prevalence of the status of domestic slavery is the unwillingness of the young men of the congregation to seek Christian marriage. So far from being encouraged to this step by the heads of the houses who attend church services, they are often most seriously hindered and discouraged from it. The natural result is, of course, a painful necessity to remove from the class-lists of the Church the names of those who take to themselves wives "country fashion."'

At the end of 1907 the number of baptized Christians at Tuwon and Nembe (the latter of which stations must now be noticed) had fallen to 150, and the work was handed over to the Delta Pastorate.

6. Nembe.

The work at Nembe, the capital of the country, thirty miles up the river from Brass, was entirely indigenous in its origin. The people, hearing of the proceedings at Tuwon, began to go down the river in their canoes on Saturdays in order that they might attend the Sunday services, and thus, aided by the influence of Ockiya, a congregation was formed. On the death of the king an attempt was made to suppress the new religion. His brother, a Heathen, declared that the site on which a church had been built belonged to him, and ordered the building to be demolished; while a woman, one of the late king's wives, was seized and threatened with death, on the ground that she had restrained her husband from returning to idolatry. The Christians armed in self-defence, and so many of the unbaptized joined them that it was clear they were the stronger section of the community. The opponents being overawed the woman was released, and a law securing religious liberty was proposed and passed. Soon afterwards an ordained man was placed at the

station, and in one year 107 adults were admitted into the visible Church, several of whom had formerly been active in their antagonism to Christianity. Matters then proceeded favourably for a time, and in 1889, when a Christian, Koko by name, was chosen as king in succession to a man who, after spending his life in juju-worship, declared on his death-bed, 'The God of the Christians is the only true God, Whom all men ought to worship,' the outlook was promising. But the hopes entertained were doomed to disappointment. King Koko soon relapsed into Heathenism, and when the station was left for a time without a teacher he joined with others in boasting that 'juju has driven God out of the country.' Nembe shared with Tuwon in the attack on Akassa, and in the punishment meted out, and its after history has been equally sad.

7. Akassa.

Akassa, which, as stated in Chapter II., was occupied in 1861, was from the outset a difficult station. The people were 'sunk in the deepest superstitions' and 'hardened against Christianity through having so long had intercourse only with Europeans engaged in the slave trade, or those whose hearts were set entirely on worldly advantage,' and adverse influences were strong. A few, but very few, persons have been baptized, though at one time it was said that the death of several chiefs and priests who had opposed Christianity had shaken the faith of the people in their idols. The missionary in charge was withdrawn in 1883, and since then the place has been worked from Brass as an out-station.

8. Kaiyama and Patani.

Travelling up the River Nun, some ninety-five miles from Tuwon, Kaiyama is reached. Until its occupation in October, 1904, by the Rev. J. C. R. Wilson, no missionary work had been carried on among the people, though from contact with ungodly white men they knew of Jesus Christ as a name to swear by, and of Christmas as a time of drinking and dancing. Indeed, they have an idol in a juju drinking-club which bears the name of Christmas. The natives in 1907 made a law forbidding work in the forest on Sundays, and some adults thereupon began to attend the services. A Kaiyama lad, Mr. Wilson's house-boy, was baptized at Asaba in that year.

Patani, a group of five or six villages on the main branch of the Niger, was occupied early in 1907.

CHAPTER V.

STATIONS ON THE LOWER NIGER.

1. Onitsha.

The first missionaries at Onitsha were received by chiefs and people with much friendliness, and within a few months of their arrival they were able to report that a couple of men had been admitted as candidates for baptism and that there were 'decided pantings after the bread of life.' This hopeful state of affairs continued for some time, notwithstanding the disadvantage under which the work laboured through the station being left from 1858–62 in the charge of lay agents during the absence of the Rev. J. C. Taylor under circumstances already recorded. The teachers who remained laboured faithfully in spite of suffering great privations through lack of food, and when Mr. Taylor returned he found a congregation averaging about 200, including twenty-nine adult candidates for baptism. Seventeen of these, together with twenty-five children, were baptized on November 21, 1862—the firstfruits of the station, and twice that number of adults were added to the Church in the course of the following twelve months. The converts had to endure some domestic persecution, and at one time a plot was made by the Heathen to burn the mission-house and expel the teachers from the town. The king, however, extended his protection to the agents. He was strengthened in his determination to do so by a message from the king of Idda, a town of great influence thirty miles higher up the river. The latter, who had often appealed in vain for teachers for his own town, said, 'Take care of white men; they are your best friends.' The workers, of course, were Africans, but the king identified them with the Europeans by whom they were sent.

Protests against human Sacrifices.

Among the evils against which the Christians steadily set their faces was the terrible custom of sacrificing human beings. Not only the missionary, but some of the converts also, were bold enough to rebuke the king himself. Mr. Taylor wrote in his journal in 1865:—'The funeral of Prince Odiri took place this evening in great pomp, but I am deeply sorry to state that

four human sacrifices were to add to its solemnity. I interceded for the poor victims. The king was willing to spare them, but his relatives were against it. The king told me that he will sacrifice two, and two bullocks instead of the other two. . . . Upon my return to the king's quarters I found Adam vehemently lecturing him. . . . No sooner had Adam Anyebu finished his rebuke to his sovereign than Simon Jonas Mbanngo stepped forward, fell down on his knees, and gave the accustomed salutation, "Igwe," i.e. "the head." He reiterated Adam's remarks, and showed the king the folly of human sacrifice. I herewith subjoin his own words:—"Your great-grandfather, in bygone years, had killed many precious lives: has he gained anything by them? Your father, King Odogu, had done so, and we, his subjects, did tremble at his proceedings, and wondered with awe to witness his inhumanity, dissipation, and bloodshed. What good followed? The Gospel, which we had never known or heard of, appeared in your days: prize it! prize it! prize it! You have to give an account to your Maker and Judge! Do not shed blood. Never mind about the mouth of your subjects: what can they do?"'

Though these remonstrances apparently availed but little at the time, they had their effect, for in 1866 two men of Asaba who were anxious to obtain a slave to be sacrificed at the funeral of a chief of that town had to depart from Onitsha without succeeding in their efforts. 'Onitsha fears God too much,' one of them said. 'No man is willing to sell a man or a woman to be slain for the dead.' Then, smiting his breast, he added, 'Onitsha, Onitsha, Onitsha is changed. Formerly we had access to any number of victims; now, none, none.' Well might Mr. Taylor write, 'If there be any fact worthy of notice in the annals of a Mission like this, where gross darkness covers the people, this is one, and ought to be written in letters of gold.' From time to time in after years these sacrifices were made, as on the occasion in 1868, already mentioned,* when a female slave was cruelly done to death to atone for the sin of the people in forsaking the religion of their forefathers, and, a little later, on the death of the king of Onitsha, when it was proposed to sacrifice sixty people, but through the protests of the missionaries and merchants the number was reduced to seven. In 1877 a final blow was struck at these cruelties by the conclu-

* See p. 12.

sion of a treaty which, among other matters, bound the king to do his utmost to put a stop to them.

Efforts to suppress Christianity.

The first ten years after the opening of the station were, on the whole, years of peace, and it was not until 1868 that any very serious endeavour was made to prevent the further progress of Christianity. Then active persecution broke out and the mission agents were threatened. Upon appeal to the king he demanded (1) that the converts should join their friends in performing superstitious rites and in eating things offered to idols; (2) that they should be forbidden to use as food certain fish which the Heathen regarded as sacred; (3) that they should be forbidden to adopt European dress; (4) that Onitsha women should not be employed in working clay for buildings; and (5) that the Christians should intermarry with the Heathen. To these requirements Bishop Crowther replied that to accede to the first was out of the question; that if the fish were really sacred, the gods surely could protect their own property and cause the death of the offenders; that the converts were not urged to adopt European costume; that the women were not employed as stated; and that marriage was not a matter for compulsion of any sort. The Bishop's reply was followed by bold witness on the part of Adam Anyebu, whose bravery in 1865 has already been referred to. He stepped forward and appealed to the king and chiefs, who could not but remember him to have been a very wicked man, a thief, liar, an immoral character in time past, and asked whether, since his conversion to Christianity, they had ever had cause to complain of him as formerly. It was Christianity that had made this change, and therefore, rather than that any one should take his religion from him he would lose his life. The king admitted the force of Adam's argument, but soon afterwards ordered all the Christians to quit the country. Before long, however, he cancelled the edict and solemnly guaranteed liberty of worship in Onitsha. He kept his promise to protect the Christians and became very friendly, opening his residence for services which he himself attended.

Small-pox tends to the Furtherance of the Gospel.

These events were followed by a great impulse to the Gospel through an outbreak of small-pox, which carried off many of the

inhabitants of the town. All kinds of superstitious notions were formed respecting the cause of the epidemic, some of these being at first unfavourable to the Christians. A dream, however, seen by one of the people, led to a change of view, and the epidemic then was said to be due to their neglect of the Gospel, with the result that the church was soon filled to overflowing. But the state of affairs was not satisfactory. Polygamy and immorality were sadly prevalent among the converts; one of the native clergy fell into grievous sin; and some of the Christians who prospered in trade, being perhaps especially exposed to the evil influence of the mercantile agents in the town, became backsliders. But during this period the Church extended its borders, first Osamare, twenty miles south of Onitsha, then Asaba, on the opposite bank of the river, and then other places as well, being occupied.

Saving Twins.

In the year 1879 some trouble was again experienced by the converts through their running counter to the prejudices of the people. The wife of one of the Christians had twin children born to her. At first she and her husband were overwhelmed with terror, for it was the custom of the town to destroy twins immediately on their birth, but the parents resolved, after conference with their fellow-Christians, to act with boldness, and, so far from destroying the infants, they fired guns as an open expression of joy and thankfulness at their birth. The Heathen, on hearing what had happened, were filled with fury. Messengers were sent by the king and chiefs commanding both the immediate destruction of the infants and also the offering up of two human sacrifices to expiate the guilt of having kept them alive so long. An angry mob surrounded the gates of the Christian compound, endeavouring to force an entrance, but the Christians succeeded in repelling them. Happily no blood was shed, and the matter was compromised by the removal of the children from the place. A month or two afterwards the mob again got out of hand and plundered several of the factories and fired on H.M.S. *Pioneer* and some trading steamers. Punitive measures had in consequence to be adopted and the town was shelled, all the inhabitants, including the converts, taking to flight. On the return of the Christians in the following year a special evangelistic effort was organized, two men and two women being assigned to

each of the nine districts into which the town was divided, for the purpose of visiting the people, especially on Sunday mornings, and persuading them to attend the services. Their labours were immediately crowned with success, for the congregation grew week by week until on Christmas Day no fewer than 1,100 people were present in church.

Backsliding.

The spiritual fervour thus displayed unhappily did not last, but was replaced by a marked declension in faith and zeal. The canker which was 'eating out the heart' of the Church was polygamy, and it spread with alarming rapidity. Many former members of the Church became ardent votaries of idol-worship, and by charges of disloyalty and threats of violence succeeded in involving nearly the whole body of professing Christians in complicity with idolatry. The Royal Niger Company at the time (1889) was prosecuting war with Obusi, and invited the help of the neighbouring tribes. Certain of the leading backsliders offered a sacrifice that the young men might have courage to proceed to the war, and a resolution was passed that all should partake of the sacrifice or leave the town. At first the Christians refused compliance, but the threats of their foes were too much for them, and at length, to use the words of Archdeacon H. Johnson, 'courage oozed out at the extremities of the converts, and they ate of the sacrificial kola-nut and drank of the "devil's cup," and caused the enemies of the Gospel to blaspheme.' For some time afterwards the Christians appeared to have but little sense of the sin of their action, but by degrees a revival of spiritual life was brought about, and the number of adult baptisms, which had greatly fallen off, increased steadily. Indeed, since 1890, when European missionaries were first appointed to the town, there has been consistent advance. First a dispensary was established; then a girls' training-school was opened; then industrial work was set on foot; then a training class was instituted. Two congregations have grown up, one at Christ Church, Onitsha Waterside, and the other at Immanuel Church, Onitsha Town, and many of the villages in the district have been occupied as stations or out-stations. A pastorate was provisionally established in 1904, and placed on a permanent basis two years later, which now includes eight congregations, four (including the above) on

the east and four on the west of the Niger; and when, in 1907, the jubilee of the Mission was celebrated, the thankofferings of the people amounted to £257. The number of adherents of the Mission at Onitsha and the stations on that side of the river increased from 466 at the end of 1891 to 1,218 at the end of 1907, and the adult baptisms from eighteen in the former year to 167 in the latter.

Out-stations.

A large number of out-stations are now worked from Onitsha, and at many of them considerable progress has been made. Among them may be mentioned *Ogbunike*, a hard place, but where nevertheless some fruit has been gathered in; *Oba*, where there are nearly 100 Church members, and the congregation has joined the Ibo Pastorate; and *Orifita*, where the agent is supported by the congregation of Christ Church, Onitsha.

2. Osamare.

Among the first places to which the work branched out from Onitsha was Osamare, a market town with a population of 3,000, about twenty miles to the south. In response to the invitation of the chiefs the Rev. J. Düring, an African clergyman (not to be confounded with the German missionary, the Rev. H. Düring, who laboured in Sierra Leone), took up his residence in the town in 1872. He was soon successful in gathering together a little congregation, including some of the chiefs, and in inducing one or two men to renounce idolatry. He was enabled also to bring about some abatement in the cruel practices which were prevalent, and rescued so many aged women, charged with witchcraft, from drinking the poisonous water of ordeal that he earned the title of 'the life of old women.' Mr. Düring worked at Osamare for some ten years, and then the station was left for a while without any teacher. A lay agent was appointed in 1887, but he was withdrawn in 1890, and nearly all the Christians became polygamists, while several of them relapsed into idolatry. The place was visited from time to time until towards the end of the decade, when the converts severed their connexion with the Society and joined the Roman Catholics, because they were told that no agent could be appointed to superintend the work among them unless they provided one-third of his salary.

3. Obusi.

Obusi, which lies some four or five miles south-east of Onitsha, was the scene, at Easter, 1882, of a special evangelistic effort on the part of the Onitsha Christians, fifteen of whom went over to tell the story of the Resurrection. The people gathered in considerable numbers to listen to them, and when Archdeacon H. Johnson visited the place later in the year a concourse of 1,500 natives assembled at the preaching. The outlook was so hopeful that arrangements were made for regular visits to be paid to the town, and in 1884 sixty-seven persons were baptized. The new converts showed great anxiety to win their neighbours for Christ, but their zeal was not tempered with discretion, for they seized every opportunity of insulting the gods of the Heathen. For example: they caught and used as food the fish sacred to one of the gods; and they killed and ate certain snakes which were regarded as sacred. Again, at the annual festival of Orisa, the great national god, when no one is allowed to eat *coco* (an edible root), the Christians ostentatiously peeled, cooked, and ate the root in the presence of the Heathen, mockingly telling them to report their action to the god, and ask him to punish them if he could. Under the circumstances it is hardly surprising that persecution broke out. Some of the converts were seized, tied up, flogged, and left exposed to the burning sun, and threats were made by the chiefs that they would break down the church and utilize the materials for the repair of the dilapidated idol temples. Bishop Crowther happily was able to restore peace, but within a year or two the troubles were renewed in consequence of the converts preserving the survivor of twin children which had been born to one of their number. They were expelled the town, but were suffered to return in 1890, and a European missionary was appointed to the station. Since then there has been a good deal of domestic persecution, and determined opposition has been shown to the preaching of the Gospel. But the work has extended. Several out-stations have been occupied, and year by year baptisms have been recorded. An attempt was made in 1899 to carry on a crêche for children that had been thrown away to die. Not only were twins thus treated, but also children born before the completion of the native marriage ceremonies, and it was estimated that the number of infants done to death was five hundred

annually. The crêche, though much needed, was not a success. Owing in some measure to the lack of suitable food, all the ten children who were rescued died, and the strain of the work proved to be so great that the institution had to be closed. Lately a Young Women's Home has been set on foot, in which about a dozen young women receive simple industrial training. St. Andrew's, Obusi, is one of the Pastorate parishes.

4. Umudi Oka.

In November, 1895, a training institution for girls was opened at Onitsha, its object being to give the inmates such instruction in laundry work, cooking, needlework, etc., and of course in the truths of Christianity, as would fit them to become the wives of catechists or schoolmasters in the employ of the Mission. When the school had been in existence for eight years it was reported that 110 girls had been admitted; eleven of them by that date had married African agents of the Society, twenty-one were the wives of other Christian men, sixteen were in Christian homes, seven had proved unsatisfactory, and the remainder were still in the school. In December, 1903, the training institution was removed to Iyi Enu, near Ogidi, four miles east of Onitsha, and three years and a half later it was again removed, this time to Umudi Oka, about four miles farther east. The institution contains forty boarders, and few years have passed without some of the inmates receiving baptism.

5. Oka.

The work of training evangelistic agents for the Niger Mission was begun in 1895, when a small building was erected at Asaba to serve as a training institution, Mr. Merriman, a Sierra Leone agent, being appointed tutor. His wife's health giving way the work devolved on the Rev. J. Spencer, an African pastor, and then upon the Rev. E. A. Wise, who carried it on until 1899, when the institution was closed. Meanwhile (in 1898) the Rev. S. R. Smith had begun two classes at Onitsha, one for evangelists and the other for pupil-teachers. Before long the former class was transferred to Iyi Enu, where the student evangelists did good service in opening a new out-station. In 1904 the training institution was again removed to Oka, twenty miles east of Onitsha, the number of students then being sixteen.

When Oka was first occupied human sacrifices were common.

Mr. Smith wrote:—'Oka is the centre of an organized slave-traffic and human sacrifices are offered in connexion with a consulting oracle called the "Agbala." This Agbala has a very wide reputation as a speaking oracle, and to consult it come, and have come for generations, bands of natives speaking several different languages, led thither by the Oka blacksmiths, who make their headquarters in the various towns represented by the pilgrims. The oracle, primed by Oka men, settles points in dispute, and disposes of a certain number of those who visit it either by killing them or selling them into slavery.'

The sacrifices referred to were stopped by the Government in 1905. Meanwhile vigorous evangelistic work had been set on foot with the help of the students, but their frequent absences from the town during the vacations have prevented continuity in the work, and the natives have shown little desire to hear the Gospel.

6. Umunya.

Umunya, about thirteen miles north-east of Onitsha, which was occupied in November, 1905, soon gave promise of being a fruitful field, for within a few months sufficient progress had been made to justify the formation of a class for candidates for baptism, and in June, 1907, seven adults were admitted into the visible Church. One of the converts, a former witch-doctor, took the name of Andrew, and became instrumental in leading his brother Peter to Christ. The baptism and the consistent lives of the converts led to an increased attendance at the services, and before long a number of the people destroyed their idols and some further baptisms took place.

7. Ebu.

Sixty miles south-east of Onitsha lies Ebu, a town containing only some 1,500 people, but forming the centre of a densely-populated district. It was occupied in September, 1906, by Archdeacon T. J. Dennis in order that he might better carry out the work of producing a Union Ibo Version of the Holy Scriptures. Large congregations at once began to attend the services, and an inquirers' class was set on foot. The people of the town have shown themselves friendly and have ceased to work on their farms on Sunday, though they continue to hold their markets on that day. Two young men were baptized towards the end of 1907.

8. Asaba.

Immediately opposite Onitsha, on the west bank of the Niger, lies Asaba, the oldest of the stations of the Society in that district. The town consists of five large villages, with a total population of 6,000, and was first occupied in 1874. The early accounts of the people described them as sunk in the same superstitions and guilty of the same awful cruelties as their countrymen on the other side of the river. There were 420 kings or chiefs, who 'waded to their dignity through human blood,' for each had to make a human sacrifice on his admission to the order, and two slaves were offered at his death; indeed there was a regular community of slaves who were kept with no other object than that of being thus sacrificed. Archdeacon H. Johnson wrote some years later:—'Like Onitsha, Obusi, and other large towns in this district, Asaba is divided into nine townships, each having its "Ugules" or home-born slaves, located at a convenient distance outside the township. The Ugules formed a village by themselves, and all the inhabitants of each village, men, women, and children, were victims who were being nourished for sacrifice. They did not belong to an individual, but to the whole township, and each one knew beforehand the end to which he or she was destined. They had no rights or privileges whatever, were not allowed to go beyond a prescribed limit, and hence were in complete ignorance of the outside world. Even such a place as Onitsha, which is but half an hour's pull from Asaba, was unknown to grown-up ones among these slaves.'

Progress at Asaba has been but slow on the whole. Three adults were received into the visible Church in 1882, one of them declaring in picturesque language, 'I was wandering, and the Lord put a hook to my ears and drew me back'; but soon afterwards the station was left without a teacher for four years. Within a short time after the resumption of work the chiefs were informed that the Government would no longer tolerate the sacrifice of human beings, but, as already narrated, two sacrifices were offered a few days later, and the people proceeded to attack the quarters of the Royal Niger Company's Constabulary. They were, however, soon compelled to retreat, and it was provided as a condition of peace that the Ugules should all be liberated. The *quondam* slaves began to attend the services and the number of baptisms increased.

Since 1895 the work has been extended to a number of out-stations, but at Asaba the Heathen have for the most part continued to regard the Gospel with 'supreme indifference,' and the behaviour of many of the converts, unhappily, has not been such as to attract their countrymen to Christianity. A very successful night-school for men and lads was established in 1903, and one in the following year for girls. As already stated, a training class for evangelists was carried on at Asaba for some time. Holy Trinity, Asaba, is one of the Pastorate churches.

Out-stations.

Ugbolu.—The work at Ugbolu, nine miles north-west of Asaba, sprang up through a man who was placed there in 1898 as caretaker of the little rest-house. He made good use of his opportunities of influencing others, and was instrumental in leading seventeen persons to abandon idolatry. Eleven of them were baptized in 1900. They were challenged by the Heathen to prove their faith by killing and eating a ram, for, according to the superstition of the place, instantaneous death or the cutting off of the nose of the offender was the inevitable penalty inflicted by the god on any one killing that animal and feasting on its flesh. The Christians responded to the challenge, and naturally suffered no harm in consequence. Advance was for a time continuous, and the oldest chief, a man upwards of ninety years of age, and other prominent natives embraced Christianity. Recently, however, there have been some serious cases of backsliding, and the present condition of the little Church is not at all satisfactory. The congregation connected with the church, St. Philip's, have joined the Ibo Pastorate.

Akwukwu.—Great opposition was experienced at this out-station, which lies eighteen miles north-west of Asaba, when work was begun in 1895, but within less than three years the first converts, including eleven adults and the children of some of them, were baptized. In the course of 1898 a general rising against the Royal Niger Company occurred in the neighbourhood, and the Akwukwu Christians, who would not join in the revolt, had to leave their homes for three months and take refuge on the borders of a forest four miles distant. Having returned when the rising was put down, their numbers increased so much that they decided to pull down their church, which would only

hold eighty persons, and erect one very much larger. The new building was opened in 1900, twenty-four adults being baptized at the first service. Three years later many of the Heathen abandoned their idols, and the king, who was a regular attendant at church, closed the great market when it fell on a Sunday. There was serious trouble in the district at the beginning of 1904. A secret society, called 'Ekumeku' (literally, 'A blowing'), suddenly rose while nearly all the soldiers usually stationed at Asaba were away on an expedition. The animosity of the secret society was not directed against Europeans only, but included the Native Christians and others suspected of foreign sympathies. The mission-houses at Akwukwu, and also at Onitsha Olona, Atuma, and Idumuje Ugboko (which are mentioned below) were destroyed and the converts were obliged to flee hurriedly to Asaba. They were soon, however, able to go back to their homes, and in the following year Akwukwu was described as the 'brightest spot in the district.' Some baptisms have taken place almost every year, and the Christians support one of their own number as an evangelist at *Ugbolu Okiti*. St. John's, Akwukwu, is one of the largest of the Pastorate churches.

Atuma, two or three miles farther from Asaba than Akwukwu, was occupied as an out-station in 1901, and the first baptisms took place there after a couple of years' work. The church has had to be enlarged, and twenty adults were baptized on the occasion of the dedication of the new building in 1906.

Onitsha Olona.—Work was begun at Onitsha Olona, which is twenty-one miles north-north-west of Asaba, in the same year as at Akwukwu, and there, too, the firstfruits were received into the visible Church in 1897. In 1902 the mission-premises were attacked and the teacher driven away, but after a punitive expedition, which was rendered necessary by the persistent cruelties of the people, the Christian community grew rapidly. An evangelist, supported by the converts of Onitsha Olona, is stationed at Ululubu. The church, St. Peter's, at Onitsha Olona is included in the Pastorate.

Other out-stations are: *Isele Azagba*, about twelve miles west of Asaba; *Ogwashi*, fifteen miles south-west; *Ugbolu Ukwu*, some eight miles farther west; and *Ukwu Nzu*, thirty miles north-west of Asaba. All these places have been occupied comparatively recently. Most of them, however, have already yielded their quota of converts.

9. Idumuje Ugboko.

Idumuje Ugboko is situated about thirty miles west-north-west of Asaba, in the midst of a dense forest, as its name 'Ugboko' denotes. It contains a population of 1,500, and the houses are built in four parallel streets, each of which forms a distinct village. An African agent was appointed to the place in 1901 and was joined in the following year by two English missionaries. One of the first steps taken was to open a night-school. No difficulty was experienced in inducing the young men to attend. Within a short time several of them lost all faith in their idols and the medicine-men, and three were baptized in 1903; larger ingatherings have since taken place. During the Ekumeku rising, which has already been referred to, the church at Ugboko was destroyed, but it was soon replaced by a much larger building. A training class for evangelists has been held at the station from time to time, and in 1905 a Young Women's Home was set on foot with the object of fitting some of the girls to become good wives for the young Christians.

Ugboko is the centre of a large district containing many thousands of people, and from the outset the missionaries have devoted a good deal of time to itinerations. One of the places visited soon after Ugboko was occupied was *Umunede*, fourteen miles towards Benin. A young man belonging to that town, a half-brother of the king, destroyed his idols in 1903, publicly confessed Christ in the face of much opposition, and was baptized. The king afterwards consented to receive a teacher and the place was occupied for a time as an out-station. *Idumuje Uno* and *Ibodo*, respectively four miles north and seven miles west of Ugboko, are other out-stations.

10. Idda.

When the first Niger Expedition sailed up the river in 1841, Idda, 215 miles from the sea, near what is now the northern boundary of Southern Nigeria, was among the places visited, and Mr. Crowther then promised the king that a Christian teacher should be sent to his town. Sixteen years later Mr. Crowther obtained a site for a mission-station, but it was not until 1865 that it was found possible to appoint an agent, the Rev. A. G. Comber, to the station. He was not permitted to do much more than make a beginning of the work, for two years later, as already

recorded in Chapter II., the station had to be abandoned. In 1887 the place, which by that time had greatly diminished in importance, was re-occupied by a catechist, and by an ordained man in the following year, but the work was always on a small scale, and after a short time the station was again abandoned.

CHAPTER VI.

STATIONS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA.

The conditions under which the work is prosecuted in Northern Nigeria differ materially from those obtaining on the lower reaches of the river. There is paganism, it is true, but it is paganism of a less degraded character. The scenes of cannibal revelry and of human sacrifices so common in the Ijo and Ibo countries are absent, but at the same time there are many grossly superstitious ideas, and in bygone days trial by ordeal was common as a means of discovering the perpetrators of a crime. But the Upper Niger has its own difficulties. The members of the Mohammedan tribes of the Soudan collected at Lokoja have been as hard to influence as followers of the false prophet in other parts of the world, and their presence has often been marked by a succession of deeds of violence. The climate is little less unhealthy for Europeans than that of the districts farther south, while the many languages spoken by the people, as well as the unworthiness of the example set by numbers of the professing Christians from Sierra Leone found in the country, have constituted grave hindrances to the propagation of the Gospel.

1. Gbebe.

The early teachers at Gbebe, which was at one time estimated to have a population of 10,000, endured a good deal of privation from want of supplies, but they were cheered by the readiness of the people to listen to their message, and in 1862 the firstfruits of the station were baptized in the presence of a congregation numbering nearly 200. Great difficulty, however, was experienced through the diversity of tongues in vogue, and the place was described as a 'confluence not only of waters but also of languages.' After the destruction of the station during civil war, which has already been recorded, thirteen years elapsed before

the town again had a resident missionary teacher. Since 1879, however, work has continuously been carried on, but without any large measure of success.

2. Lokoja.

The trials* met with at Lokoja did not to any large extent check the progress of Christianity, for in 1871 a chief of the Bunu tribe, who a year or two before had placed himself and 300 of his people under instruction, was baptized together with some forty of his tribe. His successor followed his example and became a Christian, and the chapel in which the members of the tribe gathered for worship had to be enlarged three times in rapid succession. There was also a second church, Trinity Church, in which services were held in Hausa, Nupé, and Yoruba. As time passed the number of converts advanced but slowly, if indeed it increased at all, and in 1882 Archdeacon H. Johnson was only able to report eighty professing Christians, and was obliged to say that their *morale* was low. A preparandi class and a girls' boarding-school were set on foot, but things went from bad to worse. There was a renewal of political troubles in 1889; one of the Nupé princes entered the town and plundered the inhabitants, and he was followed a few days later by another still more powerful prince who assumed the authority of king. This conduct led to the assertion of British claims and to the re-establishment of British rule, and the assurance of peace thus secured, together with the arrival of a party of English missionaries, seemed pregnant with hope for the future. One of the missionaries was the Rev. J. A. Robinson, the Secretary of the Mission, and another Mr. Graham Wilmot Brooke, a young lay missionary, on whose heart the evangelization of the Mohammedan tribes of the Central Soudan had been laid, and who, having in vain attempted by various other routes to reach the country as an independent missionary, resolved to try the Niger route and joined the C.M.S. The two missionaries and their colleagues adopted the Hausa dress, and one of the party, Dr. Harford Battersby (now Dr. Harford), opened a hospital. But once again it was proved that God's ways are not as man's. In June, 1891, Mr. Robinson died at Lokoja; in the following March, Mr. Wilmot Brooke also died; some of the party were invalided home, others resigned; and by the summer of 1893 there

* See p. 19.

was no European left at the station. Other Europeans have since resided there, but the difficulties arising from the Babel of languages spoken at the Confluence and the sad prevalence of open sin among many of the professing Christians long prevented any marked progress. Latterly, however, the outlook has been brighter. In 1907 twenty adults received baptism, the people showed readiness to listen to the Gospel, and the contributions of the converts increased, the gifts of the natives of the district for the first time exceeding those of the Christians from Lagos and other places who are found at the station. An out-station has been opened at *Gbekelo*, and one also at *Kabba*, a town some fifty miles west of Lokoja.

3. Kpata.

Kpata, a few miles from Lokoja, but on the eastern side of the river, was occupied in 1897. The people at first showed great indifference to the Gospel, and at times active opposition was displayed. Thus in 1903 steps were taken to erect a church on a plot of ground given by the chief and his people on which stood a fig-tree beneath which Egbunu, the national goddess, had formerly been worshipped. Soon after the walls were commenced a fire occurred in the town which destroyed 400 huts. At once the heathen priests declared that the disaster was due to the wrath of the goddess; the building operations were stopped, and violence was attempted on the Rev. J. J. Williams, the African clergyman. A visit paid to the place by an English missionary from Lokoja brought about an improvement in affairs, and even the most inveterate fetish-worshippers combined to build the church. But the animosity of the heathen party soon broke out afresh; parents forbade their children to attend the night-school, and the chiefs combined to prevent any young Christian man from securing a wife. Several baptisms, however, have taken place, and some of the converts have been zealous in seeking to win others. The Watney Training School (founded in memory of the Rev. C. E. Watney, a member of Bishop Hill's party), which had been carried on at Akabe but had been closed for a few years, was re-opened at Kpata in 1904, and several students have gone forth from it to take up work in the Mission. *Kporobi* was occupied as an out-station in 1906.

4. Akabe.

Akabe, twelve miles from Lokoja, like Kpata, is in the Basa country. Work there also was begun in 1897, but it has never been on a large scale, though a number of the people have destroyed their idol-sheds and a few have been baptized. An English missionary was appointed to the station in 1904, but before long he was transferred elsewhere, and latterly no ordained man has been in residence.

5. Egga.

A site for mission-buildings was obtained in 1874 at Kipo Hill, opposite Egga, 350 miles from the sea, and two years later an African clergyman, the Rev. C. Paul, was assigned to the station. He remained there for twelve years, but few reports of his work were received, and in 1888 the place was left in charge of a native agent. Later on he was withdrawn, but in 1903 the place was again occupied for a time as an out-station.

6. Bida.

Visits were paid to Bida, a large town, three miles from gate to gate, by Bishop Crowther and others long before it was occupied as a mission-station, the object being to interview the Emir of Nupé, who was paramount in those parts and had his residence in the town. The first effort to set definite work on foot was made in 1891, when Dr. Battersby went there in company with the Rev. J. A. Robinson and an African clergyman, and remained for three weeks treating a number of patients and receiving visits from many of the leading men. In the following year Dr. Battersby repeated his visit and was accorded a couple of interviews by the Emir, and in 1896 Bishop Tugwell went to the town to salute the new Emir, who had just succeeded to the throne. It was not, however, until 1903 that a missionary was appointed to the place, and then Mr. A. E. Ball was sent and at once set school and dispensary work on foot, the school being attended by one of the sons of the Emir. Mr. Ball has described the people as follows:—

'The governing class, the Fulani, own large numbers of slaves, the result of their extensive slave-raiding. The great bulk of the people are Nupés, of whom a large number are mallams; and there is a large colony of Hausa and Yoruba traders. The

whole of the people, both men and women, are nominally Mohammedan, the latter being as punctilious as the men in their observance of the prayers and fasts and feasts, though of course they are not allowed to enter the mosques, which exist in very large numbers.'

Both in the work at the station and in the surrounding district much opposition has been experienced at the hands of the mallams, who dog the footsteps of the Christian workers as they visit the villages, and build a mosque in almost every place. An out-station has been opened at *Kutigi*, thirty-four miles from Bida, across the Kaduna River, where a training class for pupil-teachers has been set on foot.

7. Mokwa.

In bygone days, before the introduction of Mohammedanism, Mokwa, eighty miles west of Bida, was a flourishing town with from 15,000 to 20,000 inhabitants, but one day it was suddenly attacked by slave-raiders from Bida, who killed or carried away into captivity the entire population. When Bida was captured by the troops of the Royal Niger Company in 1897 many of the slaves made their escape and returned to their old home, but they took with them something of faith in Islam. All the people now take part in Mohammedan rites and festivals, but fully one-third join in heathen feasts. The crocodiles at the water-springs are venerated. The station was occupied at the end of 1906.

8. Kuta.

Kuta, twenty miles north-east of Zungeru, a town with a population of 12,000 which is inhabited by a pagan tribe called Gwaris, was occupied a few months before Mokwa. Some description of their beliefs has already been given.* The natural timidity of the people has been overcome and their confidence gained. A small inquirers' class was set on foot in 1907, and the house-boy of one of the missionaries was baptized in the summer of that year. Itinerations have shown that the whole tribe is accessible to workers.

9. Zaria.

In January, 1900, a party of four missionaries left Lagos under the leadership of Bishop Tugwell with the intention of opening work at Kano. They spent a short time *en route* at

* See p. 14.

Zaria, a town of from 60,000 to 70,000 inhabitants, lying some ninety miles to the south-west, where the king was particularly friendly, and then, disregarding his warnings that they would not be welcome at Kano, made their way to that city. They were not allowed to remain, as they held no permission from the Sultan of Sokoto, the 'King of the Moslems.' An effort to settle at Zaria, whither they retraced their steps, met with the same fate, and when they took up their abode at Gierku they received peremptory messages to leave, which culminated in an effort to burn them out. They withdrew for a time to Loko, on the River Binue, but eventually in 1902 returned to Gierku. Little success attending their work in that town, Zaria was occupied in its place three years later, and there in April, 1907, the first two converts, one formerly a Mohammedan mallam, were baptized. Three years previously Audu, a Hausa youth, had been received into the visible Church at Oyo, in the Yoruba Country, whither he had gone for training as an evangelist. Both educational and medical work at Zaria have proved at all events partial failures, but the missionaries receive numerous visitors, the services are attended by several mallams, and there is an inquirers' class with some twenty members 'Many,' it is said, 'are beginning to seek after God; many are convinced, but dread what it involves to be a Christian.'

10. Panyam.

New ground was broken in the autumn of 1907, when the Rev. J. W. Lloyd, a member of the Cambridge University Missionary Party,* took up his quarters at Panyam, in the Bauchi highlands, to work among the Sura tribe, and placed an African agent at Kubbir, one of the chief towns of the Angass tribe, about thirty-six miles distant. The latter people by tradition are cannibals, but the custom of eating human flesh has been stamped out by Government action in all but their remoter villages. They show no fear of Europeans, in this respect differing from the Suras, who are very timid and suspicious.

* See p. 27.

APPENDIX I.

MISSIONARIES TO THE NIGER.

NOTE.—The following is a list of all C.M.S. missionaries who have laboured, or are labouring at the present time, in the Niger Mission. Several of those named worked also in other C.M.S. Missions, but *only the years of their service in the Niger Mission are here specified.* Where a name occurs in List I. without 'Rev.' preceding the initials, the missionary was a layman.

Abbreviations.—The University or College of the missionary is indicated thus :—Oxford, 'Oxf.'; Cambridge, 'Camb.'; Durham, 'Dur.'; Edinburgh, 'Edin.'; Church Missionary College, Islington, 'Isl.'; Fourah Bay College, 'F.B. Coll.' In the case of ladies trained at 'The Willows,' Stoke Newington, at 'The Olives,' South Hampstead, or at the Society's Highbury Training Home, the words 'Willows' or 'Olives' or 'Highbury' occur after their names. The death of a missionary is represented by the letter '*D.*'

I. Male Missionaries and Business Agents—Clerical and Lay.

1883–4, 1891–3. Hamilton, Rev. J., Isl.
1883–4. Brown, P., M.D., Dur. *D.* 1884.
1884–8. Burness, J.
1887–91. Robinson, Rev. J. A., M.A., Camb. *D.* 1891.
1887–90. Packer, G. F.
1890–1900. Bennett, Rev. P. A., Isl.
1890–7. Dobinson, Ven. H. H., M.A., Oxf.; Archdn. of the Niger. *D.* 1897.
1890–1. Eden, Rev. F. N., M.A., Camb.
1890–2. Harford-Battersby, C. F., M.A., M.D., Camb.
1890–2. Lewis, Rev. E., B.A., Camb.
1890–2. Brooke, G. W. *D.* 1892.
1891–3. Callender, R., B.A., Camb.
1891–3. Roberts, W. H., B.A., Camb.
1892–4. Hill, Rt. Rev. J. S., D.D., Dur.; Cons. Bishop in W. Eq. Africa, 1893. *D.* 1894.
1892– Proctor, Rev. H., Isl.
1892–6. Wilson, G. D.
1893– Dennis, Ven. T. J., Isl.; M.A., Dur.; Archdn. of the Niger.
1893–5. Watney, Rev. C. E., B.A., Camb. *D.* 1895.
1893–4. Sealey, Rev. A. E., Isl. *D.* 1894.
1893–4. Mathias, Rev. E. W., B.A., Camb. *D.* 1894.
1894– Tugwell, Rt. Rev. H., D.D., Camb.; Cons. Bishop in W. Eq. Africa, 1894.
1894–6. Hardman, E. H., Isl.
1894–8. Nott, L. H. W., Isl.
1894–1901. Thomas, E. A. J., Isl.
1896–1901. Wilson-Hill, Rev. E. F., Isl.
1896–8, 1903– Macintyre, Rev. J. L., Isl.
1897–1900. Webber, F.
1897– Wilson, Rev. J. C. R.
1897– Smith, Rev. S. R., Isl.

1898–1900.	Clayton, A. E., L.R.C.P. & S., Edin.
1898–	Aitken, Rev. J. D., Isl.
1898–	Miller, W. R. S., M.R.C.S., Eng.; L.R.C.P., Lond.
1898–1901.	Richardson, Rev. A. E., B.D., Oxf.
1898–1900.	Ryder, Rev. J. C. D., B.A., Camb. *D.* 1900.
1898–1900.	Wise, Rev. E. A., Isl. *D.* 1900.
1898–1902.	Mackett, F. J.
1899–	Cheetham, J. N.
1899–	Dennis, Rev. E., Isl.
1899–1901.	Burgin, J. R.
1900–	Basden, Rev. G. T., Isl.
1900–	Ball, A. E., Isl.
1900–	Bargery, Rev. G. P., Isl.
1900–2.	Vischer, H., B.A., Camb.
1901–	Alvarez, T. E., M.A., Oxf.
1902–	Druitt, A. E., M.R.C.S., Eng.; L.R.C.P., Lond.; D.P.H., Camb.
1903–	Lacy, Rev. F. H., M.A., Camb.
1903–	Low, Rev. W. P., B.A., Camb.
1904–6.	Lunt, T. R. W.
1905–7.	Komlosy, Rev. F. F., Isl.
1905–	Reeks, G. E., Isl.
1906–	Brown, Rev. C., Isl.
1906–	Payne, Rev. F. G., Isl.
1906–	Lloyd, Rev. J. W., B.A., Camb.
1907–	Fox, Rev. G. T., M.A., Camb.
1907–	Wedgwood, Rev. C. H., B.A., Camb.

II. Women Missionaries.

1890–1.	Lewis, Miss L. W.
1890–1.	Clapton, Miss A.
1890–2.	Griffin, Miss A.
1892–	Warner, Miss E. A., Willows.
1892–6.	Frisby, Miss R. E.
1893–5.	Taylor, Miss M., Nurse.
1893–1902.	Maxwell, Miss L. M.
1893–4.	Mansbridge, Miss F. L., Willows. *D.* 1894.
1894–	Wilson, Miss A. L.
1896–	Dennis, Miss E., Highbury.
1896–	Holbrook, Miss M. H., Highbury.
1897–1901.	Hamlin, Miss M. A., Highbury.
1897–1901.	Hopkins, Miss S. A., Highbury.
1897–	Dennis, Miss F. M., Highbury.
1898–1903.	Bennett, Miss G. A., Nurse; Highbury.
1899.	Philcox, Miss E. S., Highbury. *D.* 1899.
1899–1904.	Bird, Miss M., Olives.
1899–1900.	Squires, Miss A. H. C., Willows. *D.* 1900.
1899–1902.	Warner, Miss M. L. H., Nurse; Willows.
1900–	Hornby, Miss E. A., Willows.

1900–	Martin, Miss M. J., Highbury.
1901–	Elms, Miss M. E., Highbury.
1902–	Brandreth, Miss J., Highbury.
1903–5.	Robinson, Miss E. M., Nurse.
1904–	Lorimer, Miss E. E. S., Nurse; The Willows. (Married to the Rev. G. T. Basden in 1906.)
1906–	Beswick, Miss K., Highbury.
1907–8.	Fox, Miss E. F.
1907–8.	Wakefield, Miss F. M., M.B., Ch.B., Edin.
1908–	Chollet, Miss R., Highbury and Olives.
1908–	Row, Miss P. M., Willows.

III. Native Clergy.

1857–91.	Crowther, Samuel Adjai, Isl.; D.D. Oxf.; Cons. Bishop of the Niger Territories, 1864. *D.* 1891.
1857–62.	Cole, Jacob., F.B. Coll. *D.* 1872.
1857–73.	Taylor, John Christopher, F.B. Coll.
1864–8.	Coomber, Adam George. *D.* 1868.
1865–83.	John, Thos. Cole, F.B. Coll.
1869–90.	Paul, Charles.
1869–77.	Romaine, William. *D.* 1877.
1869–73.	Langley, Francis. *D.* 1873.
1870–	Crowther, Ven. Dandeson Coates, Isl.; Archdeacon of the Lower Niger.
1871–83.	Düring, Joseph.
1871–6.	Smart, Frederick Weeks, F.B. Coll.
1871–84.	Johnson, Thos. *D.* 1884.
1874–83.	Phillips, Edward.
1874–89.	Carew, Walter Ebenezer.
1874–81.	Perry, Solomon S., F.B. Coll. *D.* 1881.
1874–83.	Buck, John, F.B. Coll.
1878–90.	Johnson, Ven. Henry, Isl.; M.A. Camb.; Archdeacon of the Upper Niger.
1881–	Boyle, James, F.B. Coll.
1881–94.	Garrick, John David.
1885–95.	Williams, Pythias James.
1886–92.	Peters, Samuel, F.B. Coll.
1887–91.	Smart, Simeon Jackson.
1887–	Macaulay, Hugh Stowell, Isl.
1889–97.	Strong, Aaron Christopher, F.B. Coll.; L.Th., Dur.
1893–	Pratt, James Antoninus, L.Th., Dur.
1894–	Spencer, Julius H.
1896–	Williams, Joshua James.
1896–	Thomas, Obadiah.
1898–	Anyaegbunam, George Nicholas.
1898–1901.	Pepple, David Okfarabietoa. *D.* 1901.
1899–	Merriman, Horatius Benjamin.
1899–	McCarthy, Samuel Silvanus.
1900–	Cole, Johann Maximilian Adulf.

APPENDIX II.

Statistics of the Niger Mission in Quinquennial Periods.

Year.	European Missionaries.					African Clergy.	African Lay Workers.	African Christian Adherents.			Communicants.	Schools.	Scholars.			
	Clergy.	Lay.	Wives.	Ladies.	Total.			Baptized.	Catechumens.	Total.			Boys.	Girls.	Seminarists.	Total.
1862 . .	—	—	—	—	—	2	14	*	*	*	16	*	*	*	*	*
1867 . .	—	—	—	—	—	4	15	*	*	*	77	7	30	22	84	136
1872 . .	—	—	—	—	—	9	17	*	*	322	146	6	*	*	*	170
1877 . .	—	—	—	—	—	11	14	*	*	901	201	7	203	32	...	235
1882 . .	—	—	—	—	—	11	12	1,913	2,000	3,913	614	14	163	172	6	341
1887 . .	1	1	—	—	2	9	28	2,571	1,381	3,952	994	14	253	245	16	514
1892† . .	2	4	—	1	7	14	20	1,006	316	1,322	287	7	149	105	1	255
1897 . .	5	3	2	5	15	7	21	757	342	1,099	263	24	540	203	30	773
1902 . .	5	6	3	11	25	11	27	1,385	474	1,859	388	11	466	154	3	623
1907 . .	15	7	8	12	32	11	72	1,944	1,232	3,176	777	55	2,533	417	119	3,069

* No returns.

† The returns of the Niger Delta Pastorate are not included in this and subsequent years, save as concerns the number of African clergy in 1897, 1902, and 1907.

. . . THE . . .

Church Missionary Society

PUBLISHES

MONTHLY MAGAZINES

C.M. REVIEW	**Price 6d.**
C.M. GLEANER	,, **Id.**
C.M.S. GAZETTE . . .	,, **Id.**
MERCY AND TRUTH . .	,, **Id.**
AWAKE	,, **½d.**
THE ROUND WORLD . .	,, **½d.**

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS ON

MISSIONS AND MISSIONARY WORK.

BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Missionary Maps, Diagrams, & Games.

PAPERS FOR GRATUITOUS DISTRIBUTION.

SPECIMENS of the Magazines, and a Selection of the Free Papers, with a complete List of Books, etc., will gladly be forwarded on application to

The Manager, Publishing Department,
Church Missionary Society,
Salisbury Square, London, E.C.

C. 1/9.